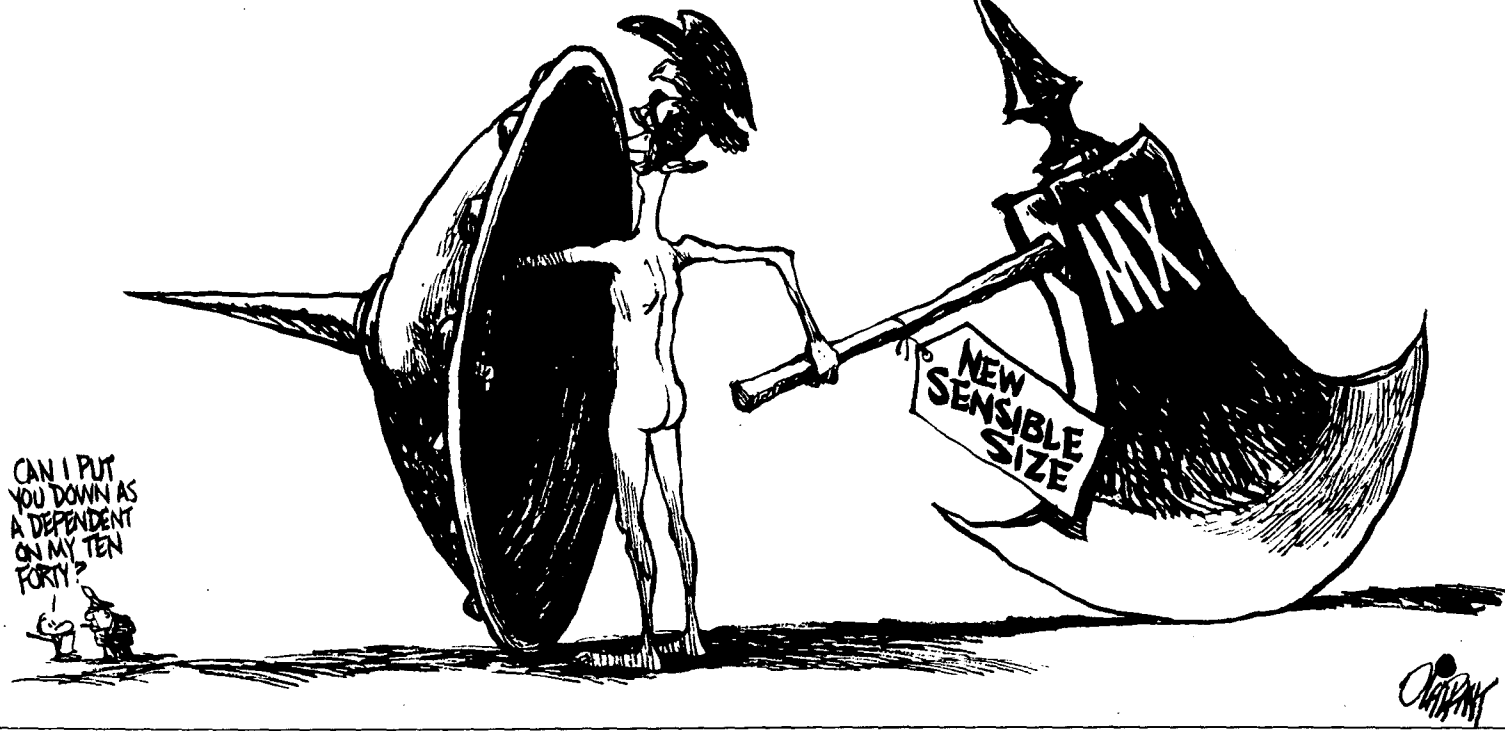


WHAT HAS DUARTE WON?



Report from
El Salvador
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Fate of the MX is now on the edge

By David Corn

NEW YORK

The MX is in trouble. The authorization bill for President Reagan's military budget is expected to reach the floor of the House of Representatives in mid-May. When it leaves the House, production funds for the MX missile may be missing. For months both opponents and supporters of the intercontinental missile have been preparing for the upcoming vote. A year ago Rep. Les Aspin and other House members engineered a bipartisan "compromise" that won majority support for the MX. But this year's fight in the House is a whole new ball game—one that could go either way. "The fate of the MX," notes Rep. Les AuCoin, "is right on the edge now." And Rep. Norman Dicks, who helped fashion (and still supports) the Aspin deal, says that he believes the House will defeat the MX this go-around.

The attack on the MX takes the form of an amendment proposed by two Democrats, Rep. Nicholas Mavroules, a liberal from Massachusetts, and Rep. Charles Bennett, a conservative from Florida. If passed and attached to the Pentagon's authorization bill, it would delete the current \$2.8 billion request for building 30 new missiles. (The Reagan administration's original \$3.2-billion request for 40 missiles was trimmed in committee.) MX opponents on the Hill may also try to rescind the unspent portions of the production funds approved narrowly last year for the first 21 missiles. Compromise measures and fallback positions may crop up, but for now MX opponents on the Hill say they are strong enough to go for an outright "kill." In fact, when Rep. Albert Gore Jr., another Aspin ally, met with anti-MX lobbyists in March, he said he expects the MX to lose the coming vote. And reports are circulating on

would like to see all funds earmarked for the MX transferred to conventional weapons.

Some of the arguments that have been raised by MX opponents—that the missile is too costly (especially given the budget deficit), vulnerable when deployed in Minuteman silos, and failing in its anointed role of "bargaining chip"—are scoring points among some conservative members. Last year Rep. Ed Zschau, a California Republican, voted in favor of the missile three times, accepting the compromise worked out by Aspin and the others. But in March, at a town meeting with his constituents, Zschau declared that if the MX vote had occurred that day, he would have turned against the missile. "The table has been taken out from underneath the bargaining chip," says a Zschau aide. "The collapse of the arms talks and the emerging deficit are undeniable factors. Zschau is not the only member reassessing the MX."

The goal of anti-MX lobbyists, explains Common Cause's Hedlund, has been "to make it seem like a new battle. It's working."

Other developments bode well for MX opponents. For instance, Speaker of the House Thomas O'Neill and Majority Leader Jim Wright, both of whom have been on record against the missile, are becoming more directly involved. A spokesperson for O'Neill confirms that this year the Speaker will "make more of a personal appeal" against the MX. But when MX opponents were pushing in committee for a measure that would ensure a clean up-or-down vote on the Bennett-Mavroules amendment, the House leadership declined to back the effort. Now when the amendment comes to the floor, it will be susceptible to additional amendments.

Nevertheless, the involvement of O'Neill and Wright in the anti-MX campaign—along with the fact that each of the Democratic presidential candidates opposes the missile—may turn the coming vote into a test of Democratic loyalty. To capitalize on this, Rep. AuCoin has written a letter to Reps. Thomas Foley and Bill Alexander (majority whip and assistant majority whip, respectively), urging them to vote against the MX, according to a congressional aide. Both have supported the missile, and both reportedly have their sights set on moving up in the House hierarchy. AuCoin's letter, according to several sources, implies that liberal Democrats will not back MX supporters for House leadership positions.

"The idea," says SANE's Duker, "is to make this a good Democratic vote." Anti-MX lobbyists are pressing O'Neill to put out the message to Democratic members: If you're not with us, then take a walk and don't be in town the day of the vote.

Trying to work with the Speaker is just one aspect of a far-reaching campaign organized by MX opponents—ranging from Capitol Hill to some two dozen swing districts throughout the country. On the Hill, William Colby, former director of the CIA, has joined the anti-MX lobbyists, meeting with swing members and explaining that the production of the MX is seen by the Soviets as a U.S. move toward a first-strike capability. This will only prompt a Soviet response in kind, he notes.

And anti-MX lobbyists have been trying to generate constituent pressure in the districts of swing House members, such as Steny Hoyer, (D-MD) and Carl Pursell, (R-MI).

Since the beginning of the year, a working group of about 15 antinuclear, environmental and church groups—including Common Cause, SANE, the Freeze Campaign, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Council for a Livable World, Sierra Club, and the United Church of Christ—have met every Friday morning at 8:30 to discuss the past week's developments and to plot the next week's game plan. On Wednesdays, a group of about eight House members and/or their aides also meet to develop anti-MX strategy. Both the lobbyists and members have drawn up lists of swing representatives to target.

On the other side, Aspin and others are holding their own strategy sessions, according to congressional aides, and are working with their own swing list. Aspin is also pressing a package of 12 arms control proposals, which arms control lobbyists, for the most part, do not quarrel with individually. But he is apparently trying to pass this package off as an arms-control alternative to voting against the MX. And Kenneth Adelman, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger had been leading the administration's pro-MX effort on the Hill.

Buttressing the efforts of MX opponents is the recent disclosure that the Air Force plans to deploy its first 10 missiles without knowing whether they or the silos actually work. But MX opponents are far from certain of a win. "It's a cliff hanger," says one congressional aide. "A few votes are always decided in the days

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THE STORY INSIDERS

Capitol Hill that the Reagan administration is bracing for a loss on this round. "They may be trying to lull us into a false state of security," says one anti-MX lobbyist, only half-jokingly.

Here's how the numbers in the House break down: last November, 208 members voted to delete production funds for the first batch of missiles. The day of the vote, according to anti-MX lobbyists, four who oppose the missile were absent, and one member voted for it by mistake. That adds up to 213 votes against the MX.

If all 435 members vote, anti-MX forces need 218 votes to pass the Mavroules-Bennett measure. Among the 208 members who opposed the missile, Jay Hedlund, a lobbyist for Common Cause, reports, there have been "no signs of slippage." That means a switch of a handful of members could turn the vote around.

"To really guarantee a win, we probably need 10 more votes," says SANE lobbyist Laurie Duker. "The Reagan administration is strong on lobbying, and it will have promises ready for those swing votes that go with the administration in the event of a close vote."

For MX opponents on the Hill, picking up additional votes on the amendment to cut MX production funds is quite possible. A member of the Armed Services Committee for over 30 years, co-sponsor Charles Bennett, who describes himself as a "senior hawk," told *In These Times* that congressional representatives are rethinking their commitment to the MX. "Members are coming to realize that too much money is being put into nuclear weaponry, that the MX is not a good purchase for national defense," says Bennett, adding that he

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IN THESE TIMES

Unease rises with the runoff as an issue

By David Moberg

MISSISSIPPI STATE SEN. Henry Kirksey, long a prominent black figure in the state's politics, outpaced his white opponents in the 1980 Democratic primary for Congress in the Jackson district. But because he received 43 percent of the vote, less than the majority required by state law, Kirksey was forced into a runoff. Although he gained a few more votes, Kirksey lost as whites coalesced behind a young, relatively unknown white, Britt Singletary, who had just a short time earlier demonstrated his political appeal by losing a race for the state legislature.

Twelve years earlier Charles Evers, brother of murdered civil rights leader Medgar Evers, had a similar experience, winning a plurality in the first round, losing the second as whites united. "Wherever it is possible for [second primaries] to be discriminatory, most likely they will be discriminatory," Kirksey concluded. His solution? "Just eliminate them."

That is the goal of presidential candidate Jesse Jackson, who has called opposition to the second primaries used throughout the South his "litmus test" for support of the Democratic presidential nominee. He has support from many civil rights and black political leaders in the South and elsewhere. A suit to eliminate runoff primaries has been filed in Mississippi, and another is expected in Georgia.

But there is a surprisingly widespread sense of unease with the rise to prominence of the runoff primary issue. Many black and civil rights leaders feel the emphasis oversimplifies a broader problem of voting rights enforcement. Often they do not support wholesale elimination of the requirement. National politics is one, but only one, explanation. There are fears that a fight over runoffs or even a mandate from the national party could drive some conservative Democrats out of the party, strengthening Reagan's reelection chances and boosting the growing Republican party in the South. Other reservations stem from differences in strategies about how to enhance black political power.

Yet the controversy is sure to bear some tasty fruit as the general problem of barriers to black political participation is highlighted. Just last week the Mississippi state legislature voted to end dual registration, the practice of requiring separate registration in both the county and municipality, long seen as a hurdle for poor blacks. Why now? "Jesse Jackson," Kirksey said. The South Carolina party and Gov. Richard Riley have proposed "the 40 percent solution," a modification of the primary that makes a candidate with a plurality over 40 percent victor in the first primary.

Whites for whites only.

Anyone active in Southern politics can recount cases like Kirksey's. One of the most famous, often cited by Jackson, is the runoff primary defeat of H. M. "Mickey" Michaux, a black candidate for Congress in North Carolina in 1982 who led the first primary but was then defeated by white bloc voting in the runoff. "You hate to say something is written in stone, but the evidence indicates it's very difficult for white Southerners to vote for black candidates," reports Lorn Foster, who has been completing a study of runoff primaries for the Joint Center for Political Studies. "The appeal can be subtle or overt." Even in moderate Atlanta, Mayor Andrew Young—who opposes elimination of runoffs—only received 9 percent of the white vote in the last election.

The courts have consistently ruled that

run-off primaries are not in themselves unconstitutional or discriminatory. But they have also ruled that when added to other factors runoff primaries enhance discrimination.

When the Voting Rights Act was renewed in 1982, it was strengthened to make it clear that practices that had the effect of racial discrimination were illegal, regardless of intent. Also, the law states that the "totality of circumstances"—a history of official discrimination, racial polarization in voting, gerrymandered or at-large districts, discrimination in education and racial appeals—should be considered.

Most of the runoff primaries were established in the first two decades of this century after Mississippi led the way in 1902. A number of observers argue that they were instituted to provide a way for factions in the one-party South to resolve differences, the equivalent of the general election. They say that blacks had already been excluded from political participation by Jim Crow laws of the 1890s. But Victor McTeer, the Greenville, Miss., attorney challenging his state's second primaries, says that the author of the majority voting requirement, Edmund Noel, wrote that the intent was to make sure whites would pick the candidates and any potential black threat could be suppressed.

There is even some dispute over the effects. Profs. Charles Bullock and Loch Johnson of the University of Georgia conducted a study of runoff primaries showing that when blacks ran first, they won the runoff against a white about two-thirds of the time, the same as in white against white races. But their study may be misleading: it used a very small sample of 32 black versus white races, the bulk of them from the Atlanta area where there is more of a history of racial crossover voting.

But a study being prepared to support the Mississippi lawsuit reportedly shows at least 100 instances at county or lower levels in that state where white-bloc voting in the second primary defeated a black candidate. Laughlin McDonald, director of the southern regional office of the American Civil Liberties Union, dismissed the Bullock-Johnson paper: "I just think that's a totally preposterous conclusion for them to reach. Their study is, in any case, statistically absurd. You would have to assume there is no voting along racial lines."

If there is widespread agreement that second primaries contribute to denying blacks fair representation, there is not as much unity—even among people who want to boost black participation and power—on what to do about them. For example, McDonald says that in roughly 50 lawsuits brought by the ACLU, runoffs have been cited along with at-large elections (which tend to dilute black voting strength) and other practices as discriminatory. "But if we win the suit," he said, "we never ask that the majority vote requirement be thrown out, because the majority vote protects whoever wins. Overall majority vote requirements disadvantage blacks but not in all cases. At the town and county level, I don't think the majority vote requirement is the real problem. It's at-large elections."

"We fought hard to create minority-controlled districts for school boards and city councils," said Jerry Wilson, voting rights project director of the Southern Regional Council. "I'm not so sure I'd be comfortable with eliminating the majority vote requirement in those districts, because another white candidate could win if blacks split the vote. In the area of voting, at-large election systems are to me the major focus." But Kirksey argues that single-member county supervisor districts exist throughout

Mississippi without much benefit to blacks, since they have been drawn up with formulas that conveniently dilute black voting strength.

Elimination of the runoff primaries, which are required in only 10 states (all of the South from North Carolina to Florida and west to Texas and Oklahoma), provokes other fears. Bob Flanagan of the Voter Education Project worries that "if we don't have that runoff, there's a possibility of a Klan member being elected if votes are spread out between moderates." More typically, Democratic leaders fear that blacks winning a plurality will be defeated by white Republicans as white Democrats defect. That happened—aided by some black divisions—when Republican Webb Franklin defeated black Democratic candidate Robert Clark in a 1982 Mississippi race. It illustrates how racial bloc voting against blacks could persist even if second primaries were eliminated and why the Reagan administration Justice Department, whose top officials have little interest in civil rights, is seriously considering joining the fight against second primaries.

Thomas Cavanaugh of the Joint Center for Political Studies guesses that both blacks and Republicans would gain if runoffs were eliminated, and conservative white Democrats would lose. Nationally that could make it harder for Democrats to control a majority in Congress and the committee chairs that come with that.

New party lines.

"I think that's poppycock," Georgia state Rep. Tyrone Brooks, chairman of the state Jackson campaign, said of the fears that whites would abandon the Democrats. "That's crazy for blacks to be concerned with keeping whites in the Democratic party if those whites can't vote for black candidates. What does it matter to have white voters voting Democratic if it doesn't help us elect more blacks? I'm not concerned about whether whites leave the Democratic Party. I'm concerned about representation for my people. There are many Democratic officials in this state who should be Republican anyway."

Although many blacks in the South may be ready for party realignment, that frightens some who think it could hurt the battle against Reagan. But Frank R. Parker, director of the voting rights project of the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights under Law, argued, "If accommodation to white racism is the criterion for whether anything gets changed, we wouldn't have the Civil Rights or Voting Rights Acts or any of the changes of the past 20 years."

Growth of a white Republican party in the South may not hurt blacks there. "You already have conservative Democrats," Voter Education Project research

Many black and civil rights leaders feel the emphasis on runoff primaries oversimplifies a broader problem of voting rights enforcement.

director Brian Sherman said. "From the point of view of blacks, neither one is responsive." In theory, a more liberal—or at least moderate—Democratic Party might gain as much strength from increased black participation as it loses from conservative whites. That presumes moderate white Democrats are willing to stop voting as a bloc against blacks.

But Jack Bass, a veteran southern journalist now at the University of South Carolina, argues in favor of the 40 percent rule on the grounds that any candidate, but especially a black, needs to do that well in order to have a reasonable chance in the general election. Most of the well-known black candidates who led first and then lost crossed the threshold. Also, he argues that "quite a number of insurgent-type progressive candidates have gotten elected after being second in the primary," such as Dale Bumpers (Ark.), William Winter (Miss.), Robert Graham and Reuben Askew (Fla.) and Richard Riley (S.C.), all moderates by southern standards. A coalition with strong black support put them in office.

Although 40 percent strikes many as an arbitrary figure that is, like many compromises, not especially popular with either side, opponents of second primaries are willing to consider it. "It's worth talking about, but it's not a real solution to the problem of black people in the South," Leslie McLemore, political science professor at Jackson State University, said. "It's a way of saying we want to meet part way."

Elimination of the runoff primary runs into ticklish problems of democratic theory. Majority rule is often taken to be the heart of democracy. Yet simple majorities are not always required: most of the country relies on pluralities in primaries and general elections, and "super-majorities" are frequently required for votes in legislative bodies. Ultimate majority rule may not require majority votes at every step. Other considerations can legitimately be called into play.

Systematic exclusion of one group of citizens on the basis of race certainly is contrary to democratic principles. But remedies for that often end up looking legally and logically inelegant: majority vote requirements are justified in black districts but not in white majority districts. Extraneous influences end up affecting formulation of all political rules however.

Just as whites continue to gerrymander districts, set odd election schedules, erect barriers to registration, establish at-large districts or annex (or drop) areas to maintain white rule, special measures are necessary to give blacks a fair chance at representation. (Blacks make up 30 percent of Georgia but hold only 6 percent of elected offices, Brooks said, and there are virtually no black statewide officeholders throughout the South.) As McDonald argued, "Equal political participation is also the essence of democracy, and things like the majority vote requirement can undermine that."

What's the best test?

Even opponents of the runoff primary are among those who lament the special focus that Jackson has given it. "It's unfortunate that Rev. Jackson has highlighted the second primary as the 'litmus test' when a more important issue is full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act," McLemore said. "He has emphasized the second primary so that it has taken on a life and mind of its own all out of proportion." Among Justice Department actions to enforce the Voting Rights Act, second primaries were the third most frequent complaint after at-large elections and annexations.

"Jackson was trying to use an issue to highlight enforcement of the Voting

Continued on page 4

IN SHORT

Mother and child reunion...

The Supreme Court ruled on April 26 that Linda Palmore, a white woman, couldn't be stripped of the custody of her daughter because she remarried a black man (see *In These Times*, Jan. 18). But it may be a while before Palmore and Melanie are reunited. The Supreme Court's ruling overturned the order of a Florida court that took the girl from her mother's custody in 1982 so that she would be protected from "the social stigmatization that was sure to come." The ruling of the highest court in the country didn't dissuade a Texas judge from issuing a temporary restraining order forbidding Palmore from retrieving her daughter from her ex-husband's custody. The father, Anthony Sidoti, now has a few more weeks to come up with another tactic to try to win Melanie permanently. Sidoti reportedly has lots of support for his stand: he netted \$6,000 for court fees by raffling off a rifle in the small Texas town where he now lives with his new wife and Melanie.

Right there in black and white

What makes a city the most "livable" in the U.S.? According to the criteria of the American Geographers Association (AGA), Greensboro, N.C. fits the bill: plenty of parks and greenery, just enough people to make life interesting, a bearable climate. A UPI reporter followed up on the AGA's choice and his story on "livable Greensboro" was picked up by the CBS Morning News and newspapers and radio stations across the country—just days after the Greensboro anti-Klan slayings were a front-page item.

Enraged by this myopic praise for the racially tense southern city, Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) lawyer Randy Scott McGloughlin called WLIR radio in New York to offer a countercharge to the AGA's livability index. WLIR—a black station that had aired the earlier report with no additional comment—gave the civil rights lawyer air time to recount Greensboro's infamous history of racial violence, from the 1960 sit-in at a Woolworth lunch counter by black students that engendered garbage-throwing and front-page news photos across the nation to a 1968 occupation of the local black campus by the National Guard. More recently, the mayor of Greensboro refused to rent the city coliseum to civil rights groups planning to commemorate the slain Communist Party members—until a lawsuit by the CCR and others forced him to do so.

A woman's choice

A recent *New York Times*/CBS News poll shows that running a woman for vice president would gain about as many votes from women as it would lose from men. Trying to understand the reasons for these gains and losses, the polltakers asked questions to uncover whether men or women were thought of as better compromisers, better "protectors" of the poor and better able to stand up to enemies. Women were seen as better protectors of the poor by both sexes. Both men and women also thought that men were better compromisers. And an overwhelming majority of both sexes saw men as better able to "stand up to enemies." It was this trait that seemed to drive the men away from a woman candidate. Women, though agreeing with the perception, didn't let it weigh as heavily on their voting choice. Perhaps they were waiting for a further question: "Who chooses enemies more wisely?"

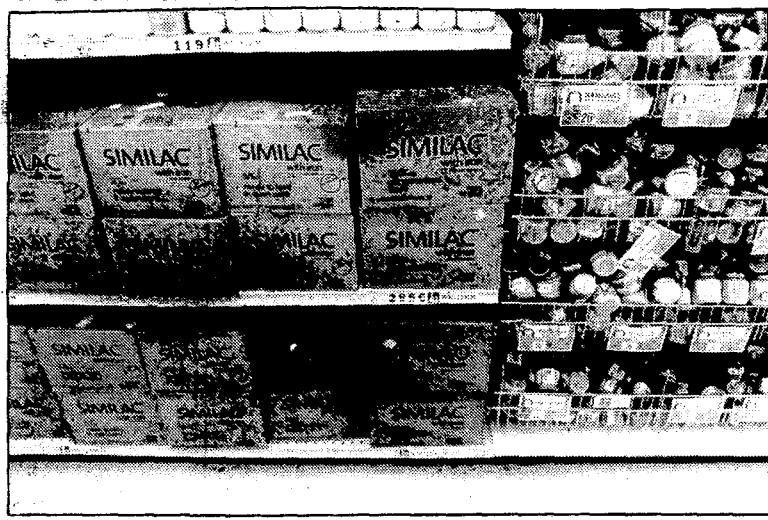
Peaceful restoration

The 19th century reformer Julia Ward Howe knew how to choose her enemies: she was anti-slavery and against Prussian imperialism in the Franco-Prussian War. She was also the founder of Mother's Peace Day, as it was known in 1872, reports Robert Goff. The name change signals a change in the holiday's emphasis—Howe intended Mother's Day to be a day when women commemorated their year-long work for peace. To put peace back in Mother's Day, the Utah Peace Network and Utahans United Against the Nuclear Arms Race recently called on women's and church groups statewide to focus on the original meaning by encouraging people to join local peace groups and demonstrations.

Socialist Scholar's Conference

On Easter weekend, April 19-21, some 2,000 people gathered in New York at the Boro of Manhattan Community College for the Second Annual Socialist Scholars Conference. They were greeted by Joseph Murphy, chancellor of the City University of New York, and by Rep. Major Owens. Organized and sponsored by the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), the conference's 79 panels reflected an impressive diversity of interests among American socialist intellectuals. Billed "The Encounter With America," the conference seemed a promising step in that direction—although still a brief and somewhat tenuous encounter. Bogdan Denitch, DSA leader and conference organizer, pleased with the 50 percent growth over last year's meeting and with the ecumenical spirit that pervaded the conference, plans to hold the Third Annual conference next Easter weekend.

—Beth Maschinot



Chicago: Stale infant formula

CHICAGO—The infant formula problem may hit closer to home than most Americans realize.

In the last few months, Martha Stubbs, a determined Chicago social worker, has been tracking down a disturbing pattern in inner-city supermarkets and drugstores: stale infant formula sold regularly to customers. In fact, in one investigation of 10 stores in black and Hispanic neighborhoods, every one had out-of-date formula on the shelves. In contrast, all 10 stores surveyed in white suburbs carried fresh formula.

The cost of stale infant formula to an unsuspecting consumer can be high: what Stubbs in her occupation calls "baby's failure to thrive" can be a direct result of feeding the child formula that's lost its full nutritional value (see pg. 11). She cites hundreds of cases of neglect brought against mothers each year in Chicago that may not be neglect at all—at least not on the part of the mother.

Whose responsibility is it? The manufacturers claim no responsibility beyond the point of shipping the formula. Each store manager must decide whether to accept the formula when it reaches the store—sometimes in unheated trucks in sub-zero weather—and when to send the formula back to the manufacturer for a refund. Stubbs says that her investigation has revealed that the larger chains (especially Jewel grocery stores and Walgreen discount stores) have been especially negligent by accepting formula transported under poor conditions, storing formula in variable temperatures in the stores, and keeping formula long past the dates marked on the cans. In fact, both Jewel and Walgreen had 2½-year-old formula on their shelves when Stubbs checked this past January.

When first confronted with the evidence of their negligence,

most store managers said the stale formula "wouldn't hurt the baby—it was just an oversight." Stubbs questions the rationale of a simple "oversight," however—in many stores the price was stamped directly over the date in an effort to hide the information from the customer. The preponderance of the out-of-date formula in the minority stores leads Stubbs to a different conclusion: "The store managers are just looking for a place where they can dump the stuff and hope nobody will notice. So they don't have to do all the paperwork to send it back and they can get all their profits. They put such a cheap price on human life."

On April 14, Alderman Marian Humes of Chicago introduced an ordinance that outlaws the sale of stale infant formula within the city of Chicago. Though a first step, the ordinance is limited to within city limits and limited to outdated formula. (Stubbs' investigations have turned up other outdated items in minority stores, including medicine and contraceptives.) Also, enforcement will mainly be left up to a group of vigilant consumers; a coalition of mostly blacks and Hispanics is forming now to oversee each store's compliance with the law.

Stubbs is certain Chicago is not the only city with the stale formula problem. Any further cases can be reported to John Rossen, 53 W. Jackson, Room 343, Chicago, IL 60604; (312) 663-1664. —Beth Maschinot

Group opposes forced overtime

WASHINGTON, D.C.—"I'm 43 years old and there's nowhere to go and nothing to do. I've got no skills for today's new workforce," said Nelson Gee, an unemployed foundry worker from Elmira, N.Y., at the People's Hearing on Jobs and Dignity.

The April 4 hearing witnessed the arrival of more than 500 unemployed Americans from 10 states in the Northeast and Midwest here to voice their disen-

chantment with U.S. employment policy. Sponsored by the National Unemployed Network (NUN), the hearing was designed to refocus the nation's attention on the unemployment issue.

Testifiers voiced their strong disapproval of policies in the public and private sector that encourage mandatory overtime while thousands are left without work. Postal worker Albert Lacy fought forced overtime at the Philadelphia Post Office for months, and eventually won a small victory. Contacted by local leadership of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), Lacy and fellow members of the Philadelphia Unemployment Project (PUP) began both dialogs and demonstrations with the Postmaster to air postal workers grievances for having to work 10 hours a day, five and six days a week.

Lacy explained that the problem is not unique to Philadelphia: "In 1983 the Postal Service spent \$1.4 billion for overtime, an increase of 25 percent over the previous year. The APWU estimates that 30,000 full-time jobs could be created nationally by cutting mandatory overtime."

The union's and PUP's efforts led to the reduction of overtime for Philadelphia postal workers and the hiring of 150 new employees.

Attempting to cut back on overtime on a national scale, Congressman Austin Murphy (D-PA) stated that he would draft a bill stating that "no federal agency shall cause its employees to work more than 42 hours each week except for national or local declared emergencies."

Other bills (recently stalled in the Senate after House approval) supported by the unemployed include:

- HR 1036, the Community Renewal Employment Act would target the long-term unemployed for jobs repairing the infrastructure, disaster relief and hazardous waste removal.

- HR 5017, the Youth Incentive Employment Act, would create community jobs for unemployed youth.

- HR 2847, the National Employment Priority Act, would notify workers of anticipated plant closings, offer significant aid to employees affected by closings, and penalize employers who disregard the law.

- HR 3021, the Health Care for the Unemployed Act, would generate \$4 billion in block grant monies for health insurance for the long-term unemployed.

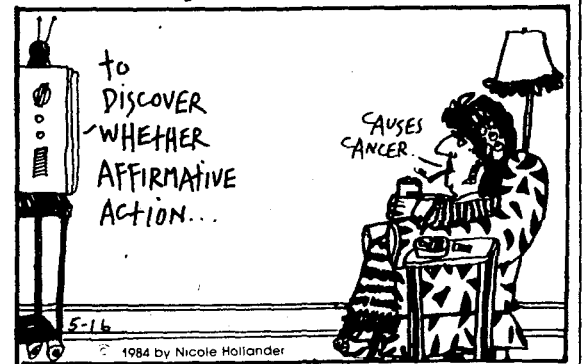
- HR 1983, Mortgage Foreclosure Relief Act, would protect thousands of financially distressed Americans from losing their homes because of unemployment.

—Allen Hornblum

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander





Israeli warns of West Bank disaster

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

THE MOST SERIOUS, INTELLIGENT and radical critics of Israeli policy have always included Israelis. Now Meron Benvenisti, the deputy mayor of Jerusalem from 1974 to 1978 and a widely respected author, has published a study of Israeli policies in the West Bank. Benvenisti's study, released last week by the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) in Washington and entitled *The West Bank Data Project*, is both damning and deeply pessimistic. The army of facts and tables that Benvenisti assembles and his noncommittal style barely manage to conceal a profound moral outrage at what has happened to his own country.

In his study, Benvenisti shows that the Israeli government has established a system of "dual" economic and political control over the Jewish and Palestinian residents of the West Bank that viciously discriminates against the Palestinians. He warns that with the incorporation of the West Bank, the Israeli regime could become "ominously similar to that of South Africa." But Benvenisti also believes that the process of incorporation is irreversible and cannot be halted by American, Palestinian, or Israeli opposition.

West Bank suburbia.

Israeli policy toward the West Bank has changed dramatically since the 1967 Six-Day War. From 1967 to 1973, the Israeli Labor government envisioned the West Bank as a bargaining chip in an overall Mideast settlement that would guarantee peace to Israel. The Labor Party encouraged settlements only along the eastern border of the West Bank. According to the Allon Plan, these settlements would provide a geographical barrier to armies that wanted to advance from Jordan on Israel's densely populated coastline. But after the 1973 war, Labor's resolve to prevent other settlements weakened.

In 1974, the *Gush Emunim* was founded, a right-wing party that adhered to a "new Zionist" goal of reclaiming the whole of biblical Israel, including the West Bank. After the 1977 victory of Menachem Begin's Likud Coalition, which included the *Gush Emunim*, the *Gush* goals for the West

Bank became the official government objective. Between 1977 and 1981, 40 Gush settlements were established. Most were nonagricultural cooperatives located in the central West Bank, but six were white-collar suburbs for Israel's cities.

In the early '80s, the Likud government began to encourage the suburbanization of the West Bank. Most of the 15,000 new settlers since 1980 have been suburbanites, with jobs in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv. By 1990, the Likud plan sees the Jewish population of the West Bank expanded from its present 27,000 to 100,000.

The Likud's suburban strategy amounts to an abandonment of the original military rationale of the West Bank occupation. It represents an alliance between fanatical theology (the right-wing Zionist vision is no less total nor primitive than that of the Ayatollah Khomeini's Islam or the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Christianity) and the crass commercialism of real estate speculators and developers. "The World Zionist Organization and the Israeli government did not initiate suburbanization and the quest for a higher standard of living. They just exploit the trend," Benvenisti writes. "By identifying it with Zionist values, however, they transformed the entire Israeli value system."

The Likud government also changed the political status of the West Bank. Under Labor governments, the Israeli settlements and the expropriation of West Bank land was justified on military grounds. The Likud government viewed the West Bank, in Benvenisti's words, as part of Israel's "national patrimony." Any land that Palestinians could not prove was under cultivation they declared "state land"—to be auctioned off to Jewish settlers and developers. (To demonstrate that the land was being cultivated and owned, a Palestinian had to produce often unobtainable papers and witnesses.) The Israeli occupying authorities also passed laws that prevented Palestinians from expanding any areas under cultivation. As a result, most of the West Bank is now "state land."

Permanent control.

Before the ascension of the Likud coalition in 1977, the principal debate in Israeli politics was between those who feared that the incorporation of Arab

populations would threaten Israel's status as a Jewish state and those who believed that Arabs could be integrated at the lower levels of Israeli society without threatening Jewish hegemony. The Likud strategy in the West Bank is different from either of these alternatives.

Some of the West Bank Palestinians have been able to raise their standard of living considerably by finding jobs with Jewish industries, but most Palestinians remain small farmers in isolated villages. The Israeli strategy is to keep them there. According to one document, the Likud planning strategy aimed at "restricting Arab commuting and encouraging homogeneous growth of Arab settlements." The major East-West roads built after 1977 deliberately bypassed Arab towns.

While the Israeli government provided minimal assistance to Palestinian farmers, the government discouraged Palestinian industrial development. And next to Jewish settlements it financed industrial parks that relied on capital-intensive factories "in order to limit Arab employment." As a result, the Arabs were to be kept in communities relying on small-scale farming, but dependent on the Israelis for any outside markets. If this plan works, the Palestinians will be marginalized rather than integrated at the bottom of society.

The Israeli system of political control is also rigidly divided between Jew and Palestinian. Since 1979—the time of the Camp David Accords—Jewish settlers have governed themselves through Jewish Councils, while the Palestinians have been under the thumb of an Israeli military and civilian government. The Councils have developed their own defense forces, which have staged vigilante attacks on Palestinian settlements. (Benvenisti warns, with prescience, that they may also be the basis for a Jewish terrorist network.)

During the 1967-77 Labor years, the Israelis allowed a measure of local self-rule in the hope that the Palestinian mayors in the West Bank would provide some alternative to the Palestinian Liberation Organization, but in 1976 mayoral elections, pro-PLO mayors were swept into office. The Likud government later ousted the mayors and has tried to

The new study holds out very little hope for the doves in Israel.

By 1990, the Likud plan sees 100,000 Jews living in the West Bank.

create a network of pro-Israeli Palestinians. Likud General Raphael Eitan termed the new policy "the iron fist."

Israel has not annexed the West Bank, according to Benvenisti, because then it would have to extend the benefits of the Israeli welfare state to Palestinians. And it would also have to face the question of the Palestinians' political rights. But it has assumed what Benvenisti calls "permanent control."

Internal facts.

According to Benvenisti, the Likud is not concerned with foreign but domestic opposition to their West Bank strategy. It plans to win over its opposition at home by creating "a strong domestic lobby composed of those who settled in the new suburbs in the West Bank or who have an economic interest in it." It aims to create "internal political facts rather than geostrategic facts." (Moshe Dayan had once described the Israeli strategy of nationhood as one of "creating facts.")

Benvenisti believes that it has already succeeded in making a fact of Israel's West Bank control. Even a Labor government could not reverse the Likud policies. "In the event that a Labor-led coalition is formed or a Labor-Center coalition wins the national elections, we may expect a change in style—an avoidance of extreme religious and historical claims—but not in substance," he writes.

He also holds out little hope for the Israeli doves. "Dovish groups have pinned their hopes on the outside world, principally the U.S., to exert pressure and halt the annexation," Benvenisti writes. "Their sense of dependence on the U.S. has shown that they do not believe that they can consolidate enough power domestically to reverse the process."

He dismisses the PLO as politically "self-destructive." But at the same time he believes that the conflict between Jews and Palestinians will, if anything, increase as Israel incorporates the large Palestinian population of the West Bank and Gaza.

Benvenisti rests his hopes for change on the renewed moral capacities of the Israelis and their erstwhile allies. He writes, "Near the turn of the twenty-first century, we cannot expect the enlightened world, cynical as it may be, to reconcile itself to the disappearance of the Palestinian nation. Moreover, after they acquire more perspective on recent history, many Israelis will come to understand that, notwithstanding the intransigence of the PLO, the Palestinians were scattered to the winds not because they were wicked murderers but for the simple reason that they stood in the way." ■

Missile

Continued from page 2

before the vote." This staffer, who works with the pro-MX contingent, maintains that a compromise "stretch-out" measure, calling for the production of fewer missiles, will win out. "I guarantee this will happen," he says. Aspin is reportedly considering proposing an amendment that would knock the requests down to five missiles.

But anti-MX lobbyists maintain they are not vulnerable to such a move in the House. "We expect the pro-MX side to get into a numbers game and ask for less," says Common Cause lobbyist Hedlund. "But less of a bad idea is still a bad idea. We're arguing on the merits and finding a responsive audience."

But even if the MX is defeated in the House in May, it will just be another round in the contest. The Senate remains behind the MX. (The lobbying effort of the MX opponents there is aimed at in-

suring that the Senate vote on the MX does not precede the House vote.) If the House rejects the missile and the Senate supports it, the deadlock will have to be broken by a House-Senate conference, which might insist on funds for the MX, albeit at a lower level than the current request.

And there will be future House votes. The MX was temporarily grounded once before, in a December 1982 House vote, but a loss this time, signaling the failure of the Aspin-Scowcroft Commission compromise, would be a major setback for MX proponents. A vote against the missile, says April Moore, coordinator of the National Campaign to Stop the MX, would mean much for the movement because "the MX is the symbol of first-strike weapons." The lobbying on both sides can be expected to become feverish in the days preceding the House vote, an indication of just how much is at stake.

The following Congress members have been identified by MX opponents as possible swing votes: California—Anderson, Dymally, Fazio, Zschau; Florida—Mica, Pepper; Georgia—

Jenkins, Rowland; Hawaii—Akaka; Illinois—O'Brien, Porter; Louisiana—Boggs; Maine—McKernan, Snowe; Maryland—Hoyer; Michigan—Pursell; Mississippi—Dowdy; Nevada—Reid; New Jersey—Rinaldo; New York—Boehlert, Horton; North Carolina—Britt, Hefner, Jones, Neal; Ohio—Williams; Oklahoma—Jones, Watkins; Pennsylvania—Clinger, Coughlin, Gaydos, Yatron; South Carolina—Spratt; Tennessee—Boner, Jones; Texas—Frost, Pickle, Vandergriff; Washington—Chandler, Foley, Pritchard; West Virginia—Mollohan; Wisconsin—Petri.

David Corn is senior editor of *Nuclear Times*, in which another version of this story appeared.

Primary

Continued from page 3

Rights Act," said one expert working on behalf of black voting rights. "This was not the best example, but it was catchy, expedient, just a little bit sexy, and it focused on the South. He couldn't go after at-large elections; they're universal. But second primaries are not really the issue, or shouldn't have been."

Victor McTeer disagrees. "You will find there's a great deal of anger" among blacks thwarted by second primaries, he said. "Jesse is absolutely right when he

says this is the litmus test."

But journalist Bass argues that "if it becomes a heated issue and [Jackson's] rhetoric keeps it at a high level, it has the potential of being very divisive over a matter of not the greatest circumstance." Jackson may already be cooling the confrontation. McLemore, a Jackson supporter, says, "A floor fight would not be in the best interest of the Democratic Party. Jackson wants to resolve these issues in advance of the convention. If a fight's not avoided, Ronald Reagan will waltz back into the White House."

Jackson has suggested that eliminating second primaries will elect 15 new black members of Congress from the South, based on districts where he won with a plurality. But a Southern Regional Council study of the vote showed that Jackson's margin often resulted as much from abnormally low white turnout (a sign of white support for Reagan) as high black turnout. It is unlikely that whites would sit out a congressional race, letting a black get elected instead of a white—whether Republican or Democrat.

"Eliminating the second primary won't do everything it's said to do," McDonald of the ACLU argued, "and what it will do in the short run might hurt blacks by debilitating the Democratic party, which is arguably where blacks' short-term interests lie."

Changes in rules like the second primary can help blacks in some cases. More important, the Voting Rights Act must be enforced vigorously (as Jackson has demanded) and other barriers must be eliminated, such as discriminatory at-large elections.

In tandem with rule changes and law enforcement, a massive registration drive—aided by appointment of deputy registrars and registration by mail—and a political education effort could turn the southern Democratic Party into a more moderate, even occasionally liberal, force. That may be possible without surrendering the territory entirely to Republicans who pick up realigned conservative Democrats. But there is no simple magic trick to redress the lingering effects of an old culture of white supremacy.

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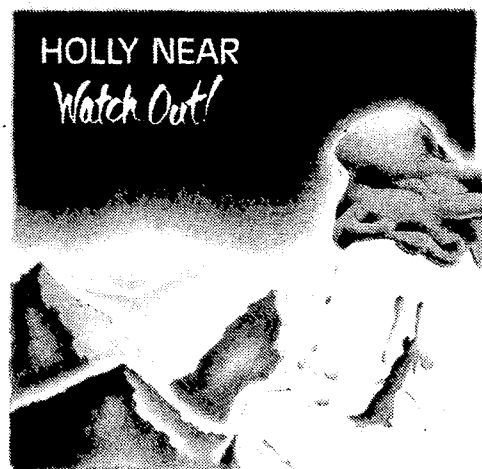
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HOLLY NEAR
Watch Out!



By Chris Norton

SAN SALVADOR

AS IN THESE TIMES WENT TO press, Jose Napoleon Duarte appeared to have finally realized his life-long ambition: to be elected president of El Salvador. Yet just as he had no real power as the appointed civilian figurehead president of an earlier, military-controlled regime from mid-1981 to '82—in fact, during this period government-sponsored killings were at their peak—observers here expect him to have little more control now. The power will remain where it has traditionally resided—with the military in alliance with the wealthy oligarchy.

Many in the army despise Duarte, though not quite as vociferously as the private sector does. The army, however, won't try to overthrow him, at least in the beginning. They realize they must play the United States' election game to continue getting military aid. A military coup doesn't fit into U.S. plans to refurbish El Salvador's tarnished election image.

But Duarte will walk a tightrope between the army and the rightist private sector, which still controls the country's Constituent Assembly. Duarte must "behave well" or else he will be overthrown, notes one observer. "Behaving well" likely means yet another turn to the right for Duarte and his Christian Democrat Party (PDC) in their quixotic quest for power.

Already the PDC has abandoned reforms it formerly supported. It announced it won't implement the important second phase of agrarian reform. Long postponed and recently watered down, Phase II would affect the land of the coffee oligarchy—the heart of El Salvador's upper class.

The Christian Democrats say they will start the "rule of law" to stop the death squads, but they remain vague about what that means. The security forces and the military are riddled with officers involved in the death squads, including the head of the Hacienda Police, Col. Nicolas Carranza, and three important field commanders. Since the PDC has little support in the military, it's unlikely it will be able to punish or even remove them.

The new government may face a revolt by the agricultural sector when it takes office in June. The large cotton farmers have threatened not to plant this spring unless the government arranges them a guaranteed price. Coffee producers are predicted to take the same position. A strike by the producers of El Salvador's most important exports would severely affect the economy and put the new government in a tough position. Yet concessions to the large producers may frustrate peasant supporters of the PDC especially if their own demands go ignored.

The PDC may also encounter problems in the Constituent Assembly, where it is a minority. Much will depend on the actions of the National Party of Reconciliation (PCN), a conservative party that recently voted with the PDC on several important issues.

Significantly, the PCN stayed neutral in the March 25 round of the election, despite heavy lobbying by Roberto D'Aubuisson's ARENA party, which reportedly offered the PCN four cabinet seats for its support. The PDC only asked that the PCN (which came in third with almost 20 percent of the vote in the first round) remain neutral and set its voters free. In exchange, the PDC offered the PCN government positions—although reportedly not cabinet posts—in ministries of key importance to the private sector—agriculture, finance and economy. They also reportedly promised to maintain mid-level PCN bureaucrats in the ministries they currently control.

Possible PDC concessions.

Thus the PDC, in an attempt to mollify the hostile right-wing private sector, will be forced to cede it a major role in controlling the economy. Likewise, the PDC will have to offer concessions to the military, which has already instructed both candidates not to interfere in military in-



President Duarte: battered warhorse walks a tightrope

ternal affairs. National security—including negotiations with the guerrilla opposition—will be the domain of the military. While the new president theoretically can name a new defense minister, in reality he will be chosen by the military itself and rubber stamped by the president.

The picture emerging of a Christian Democratic government is that of significant private sector control of the economy and military control over national security—similar to the division of labor in past military-oligarchy regimes.

Even with these major concessions by the PDC, conflict with ARENA-led ultra-rightists is inevitable. ARENA considers Duarte a Communist. Their ads warned that Duarte would deliver the country over to the "subversives," and many here predicted a violent reaction from ARENA upon defeat.



Duarte will have little power.

The campaigning for the second election round on May 6 took place mainly on radio and television. The commercials were professional as both sides put their messages to salsa tunes and catchy jingles.

The ARENA campaign was predictably anti-PDC, trying to blame the PDC for the current economic crisis and the war. Adopting a populist tone, ARENA ads typically featured two friends talking in a colloquial dialect about what a mess the PDC had gotten the country into. Some ads by ARENA front groups, such as the Salvadoran Feminine Front, never mentioned ARENA by name, and merely urged people to vote against the "Communism" of the PDC.

Such accusations are absurd, considering PDC's history. The party was set up in 1960 as a populist alternative to left and Communist movements. Expanding rapidly in the '60s, it built a strong base in the urban working class. By 1972 it was able to win but not assume the presidency in coalition with the Social Democrats and Communists.

Politics in El Salvador became rapidly more polarized in the early '70s as the guerrilla groups formed. PDC activists, disenchanted with the increasingly futile electoral path, were the nucleus of one of the major guerrilla organizations, the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP).

Since the October 1979 young officers' coup, the Christian Democrats have moved consistently to the right, attempting to remain a viable political force in a matrix where real power is held by the army and the private sector. In January 1980, after all the civilians left the first junta to protest continuing repression

and the military's unwillingness to negotiate with the left, the PDC joined the military to form the new junta.

This opportunistic willingness to serve as the civilian frontman for a brutal right-wing military government spurred a major split in the PDC in March 1980. Unable to curb the increasing violence by the military, most Christian Democrats left the government, led by Ruben Zamora (now a member of the Democratic Revolutionary Front). Then unable to sway the party's leadership from collaboration with the military, about one-fourth of the party's base quit, among them many of the most active members.

To salvage the government's worsening image, the U.S. and the military brought back Duarte—an old, battered warhorse—from his exile in Venezuela, where he had lived since the military robbed the presidency from him in 1972. Duarte eventually was appointed junta president, but during his term 25,000 civilians were killed by government-connected death squads in one of the bloodiest periods of Salvadoran history, according to Salvadoran scholars writing in the March 1984 issue of NACLA.

The only alternative.

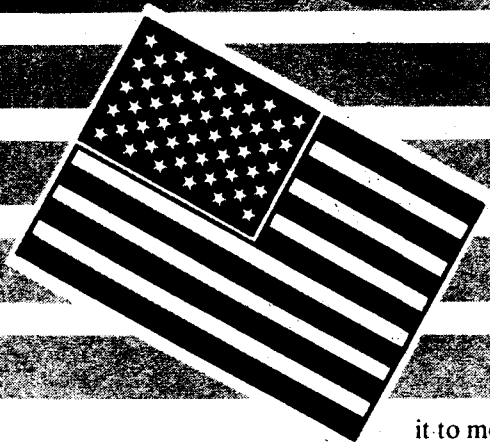
Yet despite criticism of the PDC's participation in the repressive military regime, the party remains the voters' only alternative to the even-farther-right parties of the oligarchy. The PDC retains a strong base of loyal if unenthusiastic support among the urban working class, the teachers' union and the *campesinos* who have benefited from urban reform.

In this election many voted for Duarte even though they realized he could do little to improve conditions. They did so knowing that four years ago the PDC imposed the wage freeze that has contributed to a loss of buying power now approaching 100 percent for some workers.

ARENA has been able to capitalize on these frustrations, attracting voters beyond its base in the ultra-right private sector and their maids, employees and peasants. It appeals to voters who are sick of the war and the continuing economic hardship, many of whom are ready to adopt the party's hate of the

Continued on page 15

"We want you to stay here forever."



By David Beers

AS FAR AS TARGETS FOR U.S. military intervention go, Grenada was a safe and shrewd pick: tiny, isolated, without a navy or air force, its army demoralized by the fratricide of a well-loved leader. It was hardly surprising that *Newsweek* reporters were able to wind up their breathless account of "The Battle for Grenada" and the "mopping up of Cubans" with Admiral Metcalf's quote: "It was a good, solid fire fight," said he. "We blew them away."

Then came the political advance men. U.S. soldiers jeoped around the island, blaring through loudspeakers a recorded announcement urging locals to turn in members of the People's Revolutionary Army, occasionally pulling over to paste up a poster reading:

"...These criminals attempted to sell Grenada out to the Communists. NOW THEY HAVE SURRENDERED. The Grenadian people will never again allow such characters to assume power and cause such hardship. Support Democracy for Grenada."

The only radio station on the island, formerly a mouthpiece for the People's Revolutionary Government and now manned by the U.S. Navy, played a mix of American pop and carefully filtered news.

Understandably bitter after spending two years in prison for publishing "counterrevolutionary lies," local businessman Leslie Pierre wanted to start up another newspaper, and so the U.S. military flew his copy gratis to Barbados for printing. Pierre emblazoned the following motto on his vehemently anti-Bishop tabloid: "The right alone is right. The wrong is always wrong."

Members of the Bishop faction still alive after the October 19 split in the government were detained and warned by the Americans not to engage in any political activity. Within a week or two it had become clear that the U.S. State Department's overriding goal was to ensure that the name and politics of Maurice Bishop were discredited along with those of his assassins.

Late in November a U.S. Information Agency officer, on loan from Buenos Aires, painted the official portrait of Bishop this way: charismatic perhaps, but behind the scenes a hard man, ruthless, under the sway of Cuba and Moscow, driving his country toward economic ruin and despotic oppression.

For their trouble, the Americans received Grenadian affection and almost fawning gratitude. "The same people who used to call him Cowboy Reagan, Wicked Reagan, now call him Uncle Reagan, Daddy Reagan," a cab driver assured me. A nutmeg packer trilled, "Are you American? Oh good! We love Americans! We want you to stay here forever!" A silver-haired insurance agent sidled up to me and apologized that "We made so much trouble for you here." Asked a question like, "Bet you're getting a little tired of the American occupation, huh?" Grenadians were likely to respond, "No man! We're your 51st state!"

American officials interpreted all this as a firm disavowal of Communism with a capital 'C,' and it was. But if they took

it to mean an eagerness to return to Westminster-style politics, or a sign that democracy and "free enterprise" would function smoothly and prosperously in this micro-state, they were probably wrong.

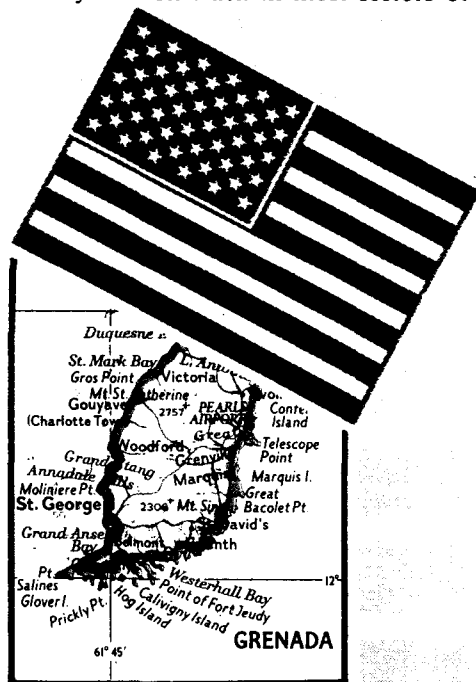
Actually, Grenadians are confused and distrusting of politics in general—understandably, since the last two leaderships to win their allegiance, Eric Gairy's and Bishop's New Jewel Movement, degenerated into violent regimes. And their country is bedeviled by economic problems that U.S. investors are unlikely to solve. By tying its international prestige and credibility to Grenada's fortunes, the U.S. may have fallen into a familiar trap: as usual, the military stuff was the easy part. Our attempt to turn the island into some sort of political-economic "showcase" could fail humiliatingly, as has happened so often before.

What is normal?

Now that U.S. forces in Grenada are reduced to a few hundred and everyone from Cap to Tip agrees that Operation Urgent Fury was the thing to do, the press seems rather bored with the little place. These days, Grenada appears most often in the travel sections or even fashion pages of newspapers. The word is that everything is "back to normal" there.

"Normal" times in Grenada never have been too good. With a yearly per capita income of \$870, Grenada is one of the smallest and poorest nations, a veritable laboratory for students of economic development in the Third World.

"The development problems are formidable and achievement of sustained growth will be possible only with great effort," warned a 1982 World Bank memorandum, though it gave Prime Minister Bishop, Finance Minister Bernard Coard and company generally good marks. The study team pronounced Grenada credit-worthy and on track in most sectors of



the economy, noting approvingly, "The government which came to power in 1979 inherited a deteriorating economy and is now addressing the task of rehabilitation and laying the foundations for future growth. Grenada has been one of the few countries in the Western Hemisphere that continued to experience per capita growth in 1981."

It was a cautious, if positive report, because the problems that go along with being a small, Caribbean-island nation will always make betting on Grenada a risky

business. Major stumbling blocks include a rapidly expanding, young, unskilled workforce; a cash-poor economy; a domestic market too small to support local manufacturers; an unpredictable—and depressed—demand for main exports, coupled with a very heavy reliance on expensive imports.

By summer 1983 some of those problems seemed to be catching up with the revolutionary government, and evidence suggests that the PRG scapegoating of Bishop may have resulted from mounting economic pressure. Minutes from a September "extraordinary meeting" of the top decision-making body in the government, the NJM party central committee, show Bishop under attack for "timidity in leadership" and a general lack of "brilliance in strategy and tactics."

"The revolution now faces the greatest danger since 1979," a high army officer charged. Portended another: "The party faces disintegration." Bishop acknowledged that the revolution was in "deep crisis" and blamed low morale among "the masses" on "the weakness of the material base," conditions such as unrepaired roads, electrical outages and "retrenchment" of employment. (He might have added that building the airport had drained banks of liquidity and created a serious cash-flow problem for the government treasury as well.)

Within a month Bishop was dead, victim of a faction that had decided that only more strict adherence to Marxist-Leninist principles could make Grenadians more productive and pull the country out of a deepening financial quagmire.

Now it is up to the U.S., by virtue of invasion, to make the island economy work. "At stake now is simply the establishment and survival of democratic and free institutions, both political and economic," the acting director of USAID in Grenada, Ted Morse, told me early in February.

Those are high stakes, but Morse said that compared to his last assignment, Africa, the development tasks on Grenada are "manageable."

"They have to diversify their main exports of nutmeg and cocoa—move into more fresh vegetables. If they could only get those into the Barbados market. Grenada is blessed with a fine potential for tourism, so they have to finish the airport. And they need to diversify into some light manufacturing," he said.

His thumbnail strategy sounds eerily like that of former finance minister Coard, now locked in a hilltop prison. In pursuit of a "pragmatic, mixed economy," Coard sought to diversify agriculture, use tourist dollars to finance improvements in the infrastructure and develop light industry on the island.

USAID also shares with the defunct PRG a willingness to use publicly financed, make-work programs to defuse the potentially explosive problem of unemployment, said to have reached 30 percent following the invasion. On roads throughout the island, clusters of Grenadians are shoveling sand and tar into potholes. In November a U.S. military officer who helped start the road-repair program said, "We want to put a little money into people's pockets before Christmas time. It's a big deal here." The program continues, but since heavy equipment is not available, the repairs seldom last after a heavy rain.

Already a flock of U.S. potential investors has looked over Grenada, but no



David Beers

firm commitments have been made yet. What they're waiting for was summarized in a January 15 White House memo to "evaluate economic climate and potential for investment in Grenada by U.S. firms." A group of American businessmen fresh from the island, led by Dr. Sheldon Weinig, chairman of the President's Advisory Council on Private Sector Initiatives, and Craig Nalen, president of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), reported good prospects there. Their recommendations:

"What is needed now is missionary movement to spread word to U.S. business community on the potential opportunities in Grenada."

"Continued pressure must be kept on the interim government of Grenada to modify investment code. ... Present investment laws tend to mitigate against U.S. business making investment at this time."

"U.S. Government assistance...to improve the infrastructure is highly desirable."

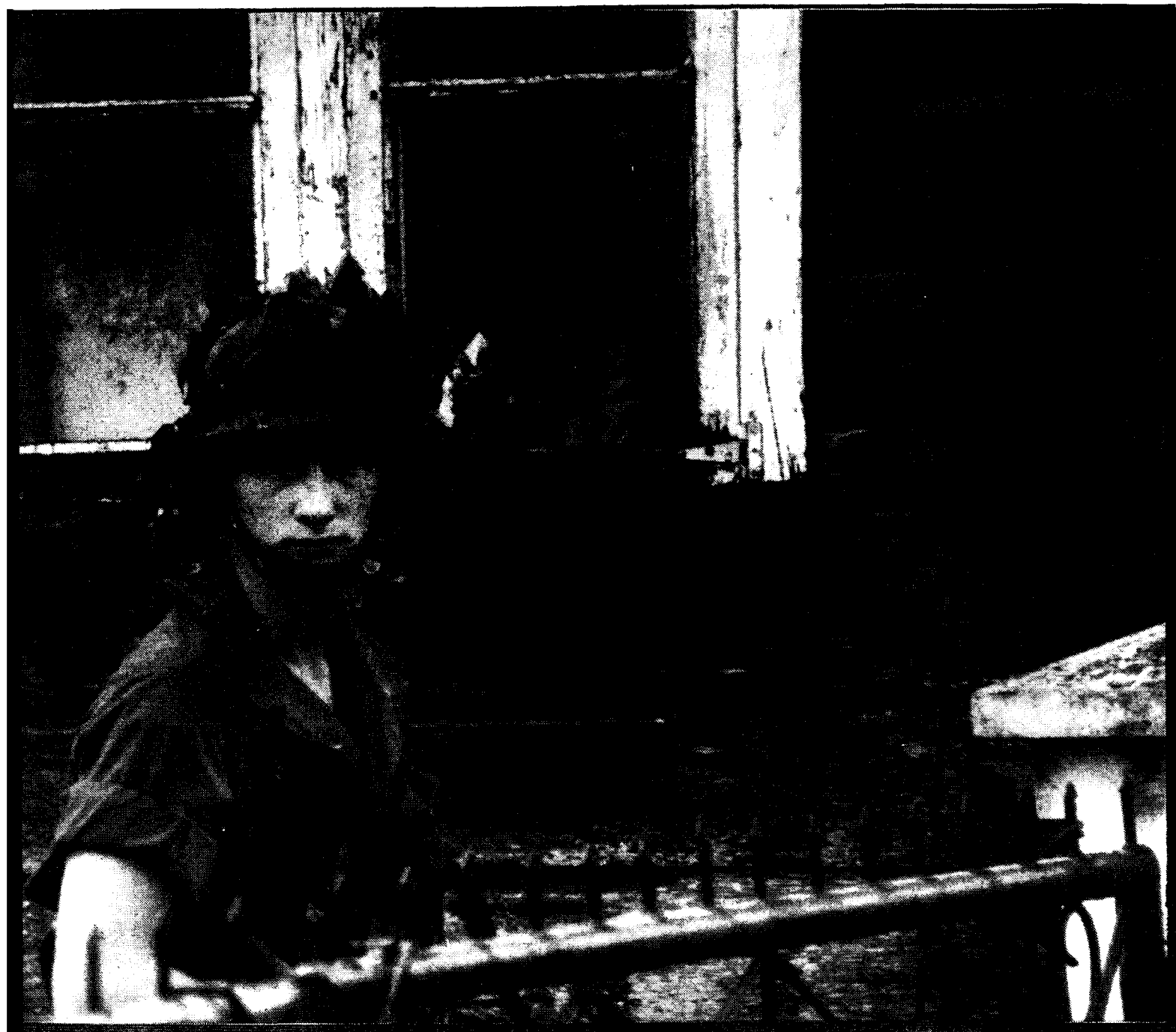
"While we should be sensitive that the rest of the Caribbean islands might feel undue attention is being paid to Grenada, they are also likely to understand their stake in the development of a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Grenada [emphasis theirs]. The eye of the world is on Grenada."

"The interim government should also be pressured to have elections as soon as possible as the U.S. business community needs the sense of security that an elected government would bring."

(This last point may explain why Grenada's governor general, Sir Paul Scoon, who had been talking of elections in two years or later, has announced a new target date of November of this year).

Enthusiastically discussed in the same memo are more than a dozen investment possibilities, ranging from a yacht marine-resort complex to a chicken farm and a nutrition camp directed by football Hall of Famer Jim Brown.

American investors may be swept up in a "missionary movement" to make Grenada a showcase for everything that is good and lucrative about the American way. Or they may not, because while they warily wait for the airport to be completed, infrastructure to be renovated and elections to bring a sense of security,



some of Grenada's post-invasion romance may wear off. Potential investors may look into productivity figures for eastern Caribbean workers, for example, and note that they do not compare favorably with those in Asia or Mexico. They may begin to feel a little queasy about the regular visits to the region by destructive hurricanes. They may become a bit discouraged by the fact that shipping charges to and from this part of the world are nearly double those for Malaysia or Singapore.

A Grenada-bound Peace Corps volunteer, who has an MBA in finance and experience in eastern Caribbean banking, said, "What I'm afraid of is that the second invasion is going to do more damage than the first. We're going to pump a lot of aid money in there and get everybody's hopes up, but the promise won't be fulfilled. These islands just don't have that much to offer the American investor. I've researched it, and I know I wouldn't invest a single dime here."

To justify his pessimism, he points to the nearby island of St. Lucia, which roughly matches Grenada in population and topography and shares similar assets and disadvantages. A faithful friend to U.S. business for years, led by conservative prime minister John Compton, St. Lucia *does* have an international-sized, 9,000-foot runway, lots of foreign-owned hotels, better roads and an enticing foreign-investment policy. St. Lucia also has 27-percent unemployment, a dangerously huge balance-of-payments deficit, and a yearly per capita income under \$900. St. Lucia is just about as poor as Grenada, and it is difficult to believe that patriotic but profit-seeking U.S. investors really can turn either island's economy around.

In God we trust.

Between now and their November elections, Grenadians will be asking themselves a variation of Ronald Reagan's oft-posed question: "Am I better off now than I was one invasion ago?" How they answer will determine just what kind of politics play in Grenada.

Kendrick Radix, former minister of legal affairs in the PRG and a Bishop ally, gauges the present mood of Grenadians like this: "Right now they see dangl-

ing before them 'In God We Trust.' Big bucks. The merchant class, especially, remembers the 1940s, when the U.S. had a base in [nearby] Trinidad. To Grenadians, who are so economically vulnerable, that is a big deal."

USAID's Ted Morse concurs that "expectations are high" and says, "The biggest problem we're fighting is everybody's impatience. Ninety days after our arrival we've actually delivered 9.5 million U.S. dollars. But things take time...." At present Grenada is slated for about \$18 million in U.S. aid—about \$165 for every woman, man and child there—and more is certain to follow. But U.S. officials would like to see the future elected government continue the interim government's friendly, pro-foreign investment policies, and so Morse and other distributors of American dollars are working under a little pressure. As he puts it: "If the interim administration can show Grenadians that their high expectations are getting some response, then those perceptions will manifest themselves at the ballot box."

U.S. embassy officials say that, above all, they want to see the Grenadians elect "respectable, responsible" government, and several candidates seem to meet all the American criteria. Articulate, politically experienced, right-of-center Winston Whyte is one. Dr. Francis Alexis, a middle-of-the-road expert in parliamentary law, is another. Unfortunately, U.S. embassy officials in Grenada worry that the island's traumatized political atmosphere might produce a very different leader. A political officer told me in February, "We're aware of the fact that Eric Gairy might be elected. He's got his lieutenants out in the field right now. He has the rudiments of an organization. He has money, although I don't know where the hell it's coming from. If elections were held right now, the popular impression is that Gairy might win."

Eric Gairy? The former prime minister whose preoccupation with flying saucers earned him the nickname of Dr. UFO? The man who dispatched his personal thugs, the Mongoose Gang, against political opponents, and whose ousting by a coup in 1979 caused many Grenadians to dance joyfully in the streets?

Gairy's election is possible, since political idealism in Grenada is badly

bruised. In a recent poll conducted by American University professor William Demas, 84 percent of Grenadians interviewed could not name anyone they wanted to see as their new prime minister. Instead, reported Demas, "People surveyed repeatedly shook their heads in frustration and said there were no good leaders they could trust." A cab driver put it poignantly: "We can't trust politicians anymore. We can't even trust ourselves to pick the right one." And person after person described politicians as a special, self-interested "breed" that inevitably brings more harm than good to the country.

Add to this the average Grenadian's conservatism, despite all the revolutionary rhetoric of Bishop's tenure. The capital of St. George's, population 30,000 plus, is home to most of Grenada's politi-



Grenada after the invasion

cal noisemakers, technocrats and left-inclined, unemployed youth. But the rest of the island's 110,000 inhabitants are rural folk, most of them small landowners. They owe their survival to hard, physical work and tenuous ownership of a patch of soil—not fancy ideologies. Among these farmers Eric Gairy found a following as a labor leader in the 1950s. During his years in power, Gairy exploited folk beliefs, (he dabbled in voodoo and *obeah*) and the psychological dependency

common among colonial subjects (in radio addresses he called himself 'Daddy'). But his appeal to the farmers was that he just left them alone and did not directly threaten their meager livelihoods.

Now back in Grenada after four years' exile in the U.S., Eric Gairy stands to gain from the fatalistic political philosophy he helped to foster. His support in the countryside ranges from 10 to 40 percent, depending on who does the estimating, and pro-Gairyites are able to sum up their point of view with a simple and popular proverb: "The devil you know," they shrug, "is better than the one you don't."

An unlikely campaign slogan, but it may be enough to elect Gairy, since his opponents are fragmented into eight remarkably similar but squabbling parties. Their bickering has only increased apathy in Grenada. A survey by a Trinidadian research group showed that more than 60 percent of Grenadians eligible to vote doubted they would bother. Ironically, the greatest abstainers will probably be those who hate Gairy the most: youths who grew up with the revolution or participated in the People's Militia. To those I talked with, elections simply signified more "fighting," something everyone in Grenada is tired of. "Man, all we want now is for everything to cool out and be peaceful here. Why we want to be arguing all the time?" concluded one former militia member. He said he definitely would not vote.

Just before his homecoming Eric Gairy told a wire-service interviewer that he did not plan to run for office, adding, "I am not saying that I have let go of the leadership of the Grenada United Labour Party, [which he founded]. But we are going to select a political leader after some time. Don't forget that we still have some time. Let me see what happens." He stays out of public view—some school children threw rocks at him the week of his arrival—but spray-painted WE WANT GAIRYs are already appearing around St. George's and elsewhere.

Gairy's rabid anti-Communism has always earned him the benign tolerance, if not outright friendship, of the U.S. But now that Grenada is to become the next American showcase, State Department officials say they are not eager to see the island's economy back in the hands of the man who wrecked it. That fact, combined with Gairy's international reputation as a repressive dictator, has put our men in Grenada in a very difficult spot.

"We would not like to see a return to the old ways—either a Bishop or a Gairy," said a U.S. political officer. "Investors want to know, 'Is Gairy going to come back and be the same old self and try to rip off the investor?' But quite frankly, I don't see how we could stop him. To say there's too much risk right now to have an election, that's falling into the trap that Bishop used, that the Sandinistas in Nicaragua use. We don't want to hold back the process. Our whole system is based on the idea that the voice of the people is the way to go."

And if Gairy wins? "Well," responded the political officer, "we ought to sit down and very frankly tell him, 'We're watching you.' He's always said, 'The Americans never told me I was doing anything wrong.' So maybe we ought to just have a frank discussion with him."

Gairy recently said, "All that is magnificent happened to me and to Grenada during my years as prime minister." If he does win, and does act like Eric Gairy again, the Reagan administration will find it difficult to respond to smug recriminations from the overwhelming majority of nations that condemned U.S. intervention in Grenada. A dictator may return to power, an economy already in doubt may suffer more. Grenada could join the list of places in this hemisphere—Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Haiti, Nicaragua, Panama—where U.S. "big-stick" diplomacy, conducted in the name of democracy and economic opportunity, has failed to keep its promises.

David Beers, a free-lance journalist based in Palo Alto, CA, recently returned from the Caribbean.

LETTERS

In These Times is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

NOT FAR ENOUGH

JOHN JUDIS AND YOUR EDITORIAL DO not go far enough in your respective analyses of the Jesse Jackson campaign, the "Farrakhan factor," etc. Analysis of this melange should include the racist "double standard in relation to African-Americans in particular. To wit: Why is Jackson being pressured to repudiate Farrakhan while there isn't similar pressure for Ronald Reagan to repudiate his California campaign director John Rousselot, a well-known leader of the despicably racist John Birch Society? Why isn't there similar pressure for Walter Mondale to repudiate Mayor Koch of New York City, who has continually insulted the city's majority, e.g. by sporting an "Afro wig" in a minstrel show—and that has been the least of his sins. (Imagine the furor if a high-level Jackson supporter had lampooned similarly the Jewish population?)

Speaking of Mondale, why have those "left-liberals" who have been so critical of Jackson's past positions, e.g. on abortion, been so eerily silent about the former vice president's role in the anti-Communist purges of the early '50s in his capacity as executive secretary of Students for Democratic Action? Why have they not dredged up his key role as architect of the shafting of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party in 1964? Why have they not recalled his own past use of the ethnic slur "Japs"?

Further, why aren't those legions of "Yuppie" reporters who are covering Senator Hart asked if they can be impartial similar to the question frequently posed of those blacks covering Jackson?

Professor Gerald C. Horne
Sarah Lawrence College
Bronxville, N.Y.

JACKSON AT THE POST

ITT'S COVERAGE OF JESSE JACKSON has been balanced and fair, but "far from friendly" (Inside Story, Apr. 18) is far too euphemistic to describe the ne-

gative coverage of Jackson's candidacy in the *Washington Post*. Jackson's stands on issues have hardly been mentioned; what little was reported on his Middle East position was more than matched by detailed reports of criticism by Jewish leaders. In contrast, there has been considerable reporting, commentary and references to the "Hymie" remarks, the Farrakhan issue, and claims that the Jackson candidacy is dividing and damaging the Democratic party (a prophecy that could be self-fulfilling, given the efforts of the *Post*). There have been repeated claims that Jackson's support is limited almost entirely to blacks, while no mention was made of the fact that the Jackson caucus at our Dranesville district (northern Virginia) Democratic caucus was half white, despite the presence of a *Post* reporter.

There have also been assertions in the *Post* that the media have treated our first American black presidential candidate too gently. Given the foregoing, this can only mean that Jackson's stands on real campaign issues have received little criticism. Indeed, his stands on issues have not been criticized; first one would have to report them. I suspect, however, the main reason that the substance of Jackson's campaign has been treated "gently" is that it is unsalable, except by those who favor runaway defense spending and violations of international law in Central America.

Anne M. Rice (Larson)
Great Falls, Va.

HOMOPHOBIC

I AM BEGINNING TO THINK "INDEPENDENT socialist newspaper" means "independent of gays." Pat Aufderheide's review of the film *Suburbia* (ITT, March 28) described thusly the film's "sullen roaming souls": "Mom's an alcoholic, dad's a homosexual, Buddy's a punk and a runaway, ... wild dogs roam the streets at night, attacking small children."

Apparently, to Pat Aufderheide, homosexuality can be grouped with alcoholism and antisocial behavior. If the

film itself implies such a grouping, I would expect an *ITT* reviewer to critique it, not adopt it.

I realize reviews are written independently of the editorial board, but I would hope that you would check your copy for such blatant homophobia. In general, *ITT* needs to expand its coverage of, as well as its sensitivity to issues confronting gays and lesbians.

Maureen H. Monks
Boston

Pat Aufderheide replies: The criticism is well taken. My careless phrasing is open to homophobic interpretation. The point I intended to make in describing family members was that each flees the suburban nuclear family differently. But this should have been spelled out.

TRUTH

UNTIL I STARTED MY SUBSCRIPTION to your news, the only programs that seemed to deal with complete truth were *Frontline* and *Crisis to Crisis*.

Your magazine is the most important in print that I know of. Some of the politicians of this administration underestimate the intelligence of the public. Prayers are not any good on an empty stomach.

Grace Benjamin
Uniondale, N.Y.

IDIOTIC AND WRONG

BRAVO TO ST. JAMES' REPLY THAT Lenni Brenner's letter "New Light" (ITT, April 18) contained no new information and didn't warrant a full page response. In fact, it didn't deserve a response at all. The original article (ITT, January 18) and subsequent protest were idiotic, overly simplistic and just plain wrong.

How dare Brenner use a racial slur; "not until Orthodox rabbis start eating pork" to illustrate inequities between the sexes in Israel. And, of this superficial, general term "democratic Palestine", let's remember that Mr. Arafat envisions a secular Palestine including only pre-1948 Jewish settlers, with other Jews not permitted to settle there.

There is only one realistic solution to this problem and it is not the stupid generalizations offered by Lenni Brenner. Rather, it is a democratic secular Israel and a democratic secular Palestine allowing each people to preserve and enhance their distinct cultures cooperating and co-existing in a peaceful Middle East.

Steven G. Karpp
Flushing, N.Y.

NOT PLEASED

I AM NOT PLEASED WITH YOU. YOU don't criticize Reagan enough. You don't point out his insensitive actions toward the poor, the sick, the troubled people of this country. I detest his im-

age on TV. I think he makes a very poor appearance.

Why does he constantly emphasize the shortcomings of Russia? This country has just as many, maybe more. We don't need him to ding-dong at Russia all the time.

As far as Gary Hart being the Democratic nominee, I will vote for Sen. Hart if he is nominated. But my first choice is Walter Mondale. He is the best prepared person to lead our country, unless it would be Sen. Edward Kennedy, who is not running.

I think Reagan can be defeated. With so much unemployment, surely people won't support Reagan.

People say Mondale is supported by special interests. What are they? The senior people, labor people, educational groups, teachers union? Yes, these are special people, all people are special.

I don't think the news media are doing right when they don't attack Reagan's actions more. We need people to criticize Reagan all the time. He is so insensitive to the real needs of our people. With any sort of aid, Walter Mondale can be elected. Walter Mondale is a fine sensitive man who sees the needs of Americans, not the wealthy, the really needy. All Reagan's values lie with the few wealthy, not the needy. He can be defeated, if people are informed of the real Reagan. If he is re-elected, God forbid, our Social Security, Medicare, and aid for the needy will be done away with. All the gains that labor people have gotten for us will disappear.

Virginia Toth
South Zanesville, Ohio

NICARAGUA

BETH STEPHENS (ITT, APRIL 25) PROVIDES a realistic portrait of a poor, small nation besieged by an aggressive superpower. It stands in refreshing contrast with typical media coverage of the Nicaraguan conflict.

In January, I visited Nicaragua as part of an informal union tour. The hardships of the war were painfully evident. While the greater suffering is borne by the peasant populations of the war zones, the dreams of urban workers are also being postponed. Real wages have declined by some 35 percent since 1981, although low-subsidized prices for rationed basic foods partially mitigate the hardships. The Nicaraguan government has also managed to put major resources into education (with close to 40 percent of the population in elementary or secondary schools) and into public health, although health care unionists showed us severe shortages of medical supplies.

In recent months, the C.I.A.'s strategy for overthrowing the Nicaraguan government has shifted to economic destabilization. Attacks are concentrated on harbors, bridges, roads, rural cooperatives, communication centers, and the health and literacy campaigns. Anti-government union federations are attempting to use the difficulties the war imposes on workers to make gains at the expense of the pro-Sandinista unions.

Another way the U.S. hopes to "win" its battle with Nicaragua, is to force the Sandinistas into harsh measures against domestic opposition. Thus far, Nicaragua has maintained a relatively high degree of internal pluralism and toleration of opposition forces, and the government seems committed to undertaking free elections this November.

I suspect the C.I.A. and *contra* campaign of sabotage has been geared with an eye on both our presidential election and the Nicaraguan one.

Incidentally, while professional salaries have been kept relatively low, professionals earn 6,000 to 7,000 *cordobas* a month, and not in a year as the article states. The minimum wage is 1800 *cordobas* a month.

Paul Garver
Pittsburgh

Editor's note: We regret the error.

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By Judith Sackoff

THE PROVISIONAL INFANT mortality rate for 1983 was down three tenths of a percentage point to 10.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, the National Center for Health Statistics reported in March. The announcement provoked a new round in the debate—started with President Reagan's taking office—on the effect of administration policies on the nation's health.

The infant mortality rate is among the most widely used and accurately kept indicators of health status. Nonetheless, its usefulness as a gauge of the impact of social policy is unclear.

Nancy Amidei, director of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), immediately disputed the relevance of the national infant mortality figure. She argued that it "masked the situation for poor and minority women and their children." In a report issued in January, *The Widening Gap*, FRAC concluded that the disparity in the infant mortality rate between blacks and whites had widened over the past five years. Based on data from 36 states and 16 metropolitan areas, FRAC found that the disparity between blacks and whites had increased. In 1978 infant mortality among blacks was 86 percent higher than among whites. In 1982 it was 95 percent higher.

Dr. Fred Goldman, a health economist with the National Bureau of Economic Research, also challenging the significance of the decline in the national rate, asked what would the infant mortality rate have been in the absence of the Reagan cuts? The rate has declined steadily over the past two decades, he explained, but the improvement was dramatic after the social programs of the Great Society were instituted. From 1964 to 1977, the infant mortality rate dropped at the "extremely rapid rate" of 4.4 percent per year—compared to .6 percent per year from 1955 to 1964. From 1982 to 1983 the rate of decline slowed to less than 3 percent.

The FRAC report is a response to what one critic calls the administration's "laissez faire philosophy of public health." The House subcommittee on nutrition, chaired by Rep. Leon Panetta (D-CA) conducted hearings on "Preventing Hunger at Home." Late last year, the subcommittee found substantial agreement that hunger and malnutrition are on the rise in the U.S.

"There really is no mystery behind this development," Panetta wrote.

In the area of nutrition alone there were \$4 billion in cuts in fiscal year 1983. Congressional Budget Office (CBO) analysis of food stamp proposals for fiscal year 1984 showed that 8 percent of the loss in funds are being borne by households below the poverty line.

The subcommittee concluded, according to staff director Robert Ferst, that cuts in nutrition programs—or any other single area—cannot be evaluated in isolation from the general dismantling of social programs.

The extent of the cuts in medical and other health-related programs, including nutrition, is a matter of public record. Documenting their effect is not so simple. One health policy analyst calls the cuts "an unmonitored experiment on many of our citizens." State public data systems are not designed to document the impact of policy changes, and more formal evaluations were not commissioned until after the fact. The Government Accounting Office (GAO) survey of former AFDC recipients, which included questions of how they financed their health care, was completed only last month, three years after the cuts took effect.

The nutrition subcommittee, as well as advocacy groups contesting the administration's policies, all report a vast store of "horror stories" on the effect of the Reagan budget on health. Experts have also testified in various forums on the results of more systematic inquiries into the consequences of the cuts. In testimony before the nutrition subcommittee, for instance, Dr. Agnes Lattimer,

The medical consequences of malnutrition are not directly visible, but they have a long-term effect.

chair of the Division of Ambulatory Pediatrics at Chicago's Cook County Hospital, told of a 24 percent increase in emergency admissions of infants suffering from three nutrition-related conditions: failure to thrive, diarrhea, and dehydration.

Both the "horror stories" and the research converge on a single theme: a pattern of increased suffering brought on by inadequate medical care and health-related non-medical services such as adequate nutrition. But such evidence is often rejected by proponents of a "scientific" approach to policymaking. Disparagingly called "merely anecdotal," it fails to establish a definitive link between the cuts and ill health, they charge.

The long-term effects.

But the links are difficult to establish. One reason is that the full consequences of inadequate care—medical and otherwise—may not be felt for many years. As the poor forego adequate care, analysts fear that gestating health problems will be far more serious than the same problems at an incipient stage. Dr. Howard Hiatt, dean of the Harvard School of Public Health, predicts that "much of the medical damage will never be repaired, even by the most sophisticated forms of medicine...[decision makers] may hold the mistaken impression that medicine can undo all the devastation."

The chilling example offered to the nutrition subcommittee by Dr. J. Larry Brown, also of the Harvard School of Public Health, was the undernourished infant. "Between conception and the age of three or four," he said, "80 percent of brain development occurs. The brain has biosynthetic capabilities that it will never have again. If deprived of adequate nutrition at this stage there is always the threat of permanent brain damage."

There is another barrier to establishing a cause and effect relationship between the budget cuts and health, according to Dr. Brown. The medical consequences of conditions like malnutrition, he points out, are not highly visible in the U.S., so such cases are not likely to show up in the infant mortality rate. Americans suffer instead from what is called "silent undernutrition." Bellies are not distended and rib cages exposed. Instead, children suffer from anemia or failure to thrive. They become highly susceptible to lead poisoning. Or they bear the social consequences

PERSPECTIVES

The Reagan cuts kill infants



of malnourishment: decreased attention span and memory, learning disabilities and low energy levels. Women give birth to low birth-weight infants who may suffer irreparable handicaps, but survive because of advances in neonatal technology. And the elderly poor succumb to pneumonia as malnutrition lowers their resistance to infection.

Meeting the administration on their own terms, critics have also challenged the cost effectiveness of cutbacks in health and related programs. "Most of them," according to Goldman, "cannot be justified on economic grounds. While they may contribute to a balanced budget in the short term, the economic savings virtually disappear in the long run."

The WIC program (Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children) is usually offered as a classic example. It cost \$450 for food supplements for each pregnant woman, supplements that are known to contribute

to the health of the mother and the infant. The cost of one day in a neonatal intensive care unit for a premature or low birth-weight infant is approximately the same. Due to inadequate funding, the WIC program serves only about 30 percent of those who are income and medically eligible.

Health care professionals and analysts with a strong belief in the preventive, rather than the curative powers of medicine have almost uniformly taken a stand against the Reagan budget cuts. They find the existing evidence on the consequences of the cuts compelling. They also tend to believe that action cannot wait for the definitive study. As Dr. Brown testified, "...a child does not eat in the long run. And an elderly person does not have a long run. From a nutritional perspective they live now. They are hungry now. And perhaps they suffer now."

Judith Sackoff is a New York journalist.

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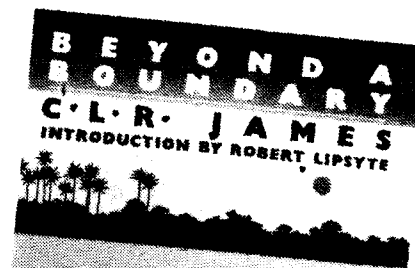
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PANTHEON

PERSPECTIVES

By Vladimir Klimenko

WHEN NICARAGUAN Junta Coordinator Daniel Ortega told an enthusiastic Managua crowd on February 21 that general elections will be held on November 4, the anti-Sandinista opposition was caught off-guard. Realizing that it stands no chance of winning even one-third of the vote in an open contest against the FSLN, the right-wing alliance known as the *Coordinadora Democratica* (Democratic Coordinating Committee) opted for an abstentionist strategy in the hope of discrediting the revolutionary government.

Although the Sandinistas have promised to provide all competing parties with government subsidies, plus air time on state-run radio and television, the revolution's conservative critics immediately downplayed the significance of the FSLN's move towards institutionalizing democracy. Hours after Ortega's speech, Social Christian Party (PSC) President Julio Ramon Garcia attacked the Sandinistas for not having consulted the other parties on the provisions of the electoral law and another PSC leader told the right-wing daily *La Prensa* that there

was "nothing new to help create the necessary climate of confidence."

Minister of the Interior Tomas Borge, the oldest of the nine FSLN *comandantes*, told journalists that foreign observers would be welcome at any of the 5,000 polling stations around the country. "The problem is that some of these parties don't even have 5,000 supporters and are consequently afraid of appearing ridiculous in the elections."

A day after his speech, Ortega warned that "the United States is exercising pressures on the opposition groups in order that they not participate in the elections because its objective is to attempt to discredit and weaken the electoral process." The *Coordinadora's* response seemed to verify that observation: predictably critical but vague, its public declarations never specified what concessions the government could make in view of the present military crisis.

The elections.

Nicaragua's Council of State has been debating the electoral provisions for several months. At stake is the nation's presidency, vice-presidency (both for six-year terms) and the composition of a 90-member legislative body. Any party that qualifies to run candidates by obtaining 5,000 signatures will receive six

million cordobas (200,000 dollars at the parallel market rate). Weekly radio and TV spots will be available for parties to air their view.

The election announcement provoked splits among left and right groupings. The Liberal Independent Party (PLI) broke away from the FSLN-dominated Revolutionary Patriotic Front soon after Ortega's speech. PLI leaders said that their voice went unheard within bloc meetings. They also opposed a highly controversial government decision to give sixteen year-olds the right to vote.

While the movements of the *Coordinadora* groped for a common platform of abstention, smaller right-wing groups experienced serious internal conflicts. The center-right Liberal Constitutionalist Party lost its secretary-general, Julio Centeno, who resigned because his party refused to support the elections. The far-right Conservative Democratic Party (PCD) suffered a devastating split when the more reactionary faction failed to expel the majority from the party's offices. When the latter group reoccupied the building, PCD spokesman Enrique Sotelo accused the minority of "obeying slogans from abroad" and insisted that "we cannot be an illegal, clandestine party."

Many Nicaraguans foresaw that the U.S. would try to undermine the country's tenuous pluralism when Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency in 1981. "The United States wants to provoke a government crackdown," commented Danilo Aguirre, assistant editor of the pro-Sandinista *El Nuevo Diario*, three years ago. "They don't want pluralism to succeed here because then they can tell the rest of Latin America, 'Look, we told you that Nicaragua would become another Cuba.'"

"North Americans say that democracy equals elections," says Carlos Manuel Morales, a member of the FSLN's Central Committee. "We say that democracy is elections and much, much more." It is precisely this revolutionary component—the agrarian reform, the literacy campaign, anti-decapitalization laws and mass mobilizations—that precludes a rightist acceptance of democracy with these conditions.

Morales attacks the right for arguing that, historically, North Americans intervened because of a lack of elections. "Simultaneously they argue that the elections proposed by the Sandinistas do not inspire their confidence. They therefore pose the problem and the solution."

The right transmits its messages through *La Prensa*, the country's oldest daily newspaper. In a typical issue three or four front-page stories paraphrase the latest declarations of small right-wing parties. The paper frequently quotes individuals who say that there cannot be genuinely free elections until all Nicaraguans can return from exile—a reference to those who would face charges for associating with Somoza.

The opposition refuses to accept the legitimacy of elections as long as press restrictions continue. *La Prensa's* Horacio Ruis admits that "censorship was lessened last fall. It is interesting to note that this occurred immediately after the U.S. invasion of Grenada."

Nicaraguans who are less inclined to thank gunboat diplomacy believe that the Sandinistas relaxed press controls when they realized that last year's counterrevolutionary offensives failed to score military victories against the Sandinista People's Army and Militia forces. Several foreign journalists attribute this to increased sophistication on the part of Nelba Blandon, the young head of the Interior Ministry's Office of Communications.

A visit to *La Prensa's* editorial offices revealed that materials censored by the government are not rejected for their critical content as much as for their disruptive effect. Thus, headlines declaring, "Contras Announce Huge Exodus of Nicas to Honduras" or "Cordoba Falls to 140!" (on the black market) are cut while stories attacking the "Party-State," rationing, land expropriations, censorship, the draft and Cuba regularly get through.

Interior Minister Tomas Borge.

The Ministry also censors pieces that are deemed to be offensive. One example quoted Elliot Abrams, the State Department human rights official: "At least Somoza left the Miskitos alone." Advertising that commercializes traditional holidays (Mother's Day restaurant ads) or promotes sexism (bikini-clad blondes caressing Toyotas) fails to pass the censorship office for similar reasons.

Besides vigorously protesting censorship (mainly in the columns of *La Prensa*), the right emphatically opposed lowering the voting age. "Sixteen year-olds are technically adolescents," says the Conservative Democrat Clemente Guido. "Fighting or picking cotton does not make one old enough to vote."

The Sandinistas disagree completely and insist that Nicaraguan youth have earned the right to vote through massive sacrifices. The government cites demographic reality as another reason: most Nicaraguans are under 20. An important political factor lies beneath the debate; the younger the voters, the greater will be the FSLN's margin of victory.

Supporting the *Coordinadora's* anti-electoral project are two "free" trade union confederations. Their outspoken enmity toward the government contrasts sharply with their mild opposition to Somoza prior to 1979. One of these is an offspring of the American Institute for Free Labor Development—an AFL-CIO Cold War project with strong CIA ties. The other, known as the Nicaraguan Workers' Confederation (CTN) is affiliated with the Brussels-based World Confederation of Labor.

CTN chief Carlos Huembes says that "the leaders of the *Frente* are Marxist-Leninists and therefore cannot be democrats." He strongly condemns the 1981 Emergency Decree, which prohibited strikes, but when asked about the destabilization maneuvers that precipitated the law, he replies, "There are political positions, not labor ones."

An ingenuous comment? Unlikely, for Carlos Huembes also happens to be vice president of the *Coordinadora Democratica*.

Opposition strength.

Despite ongoing efforts to portray the Sandinistas as being undemocratic, the opposition has failed to gather momentum either internally or abroad. Prominent exiles such as Arturo Cruz, former ambassador to the United States, and millionaire ex-Junta member Alfonso Robelo have expressed interest in coming back to Nicaragua after the government declared that they were free to return home.

Several right-wing parties and *La Prensa* indicated that they might favor Cruz as a presidential candidate because of his good reputation. Cruz maintains that he will not be a candidate. Robelo, however, is widely believed to have presidential ambitions, a notion that led Tomas Borge to remark, "I'd like to be an astronaut too."

Cruz and other Costa Rican-based political exiles have distanced themselves from ARDE, the movement headed by Eden Pastora. The former Sandinista recently held joint strategy meetings in Guatemala City with ranking *somocistas* operating out of Honduras.

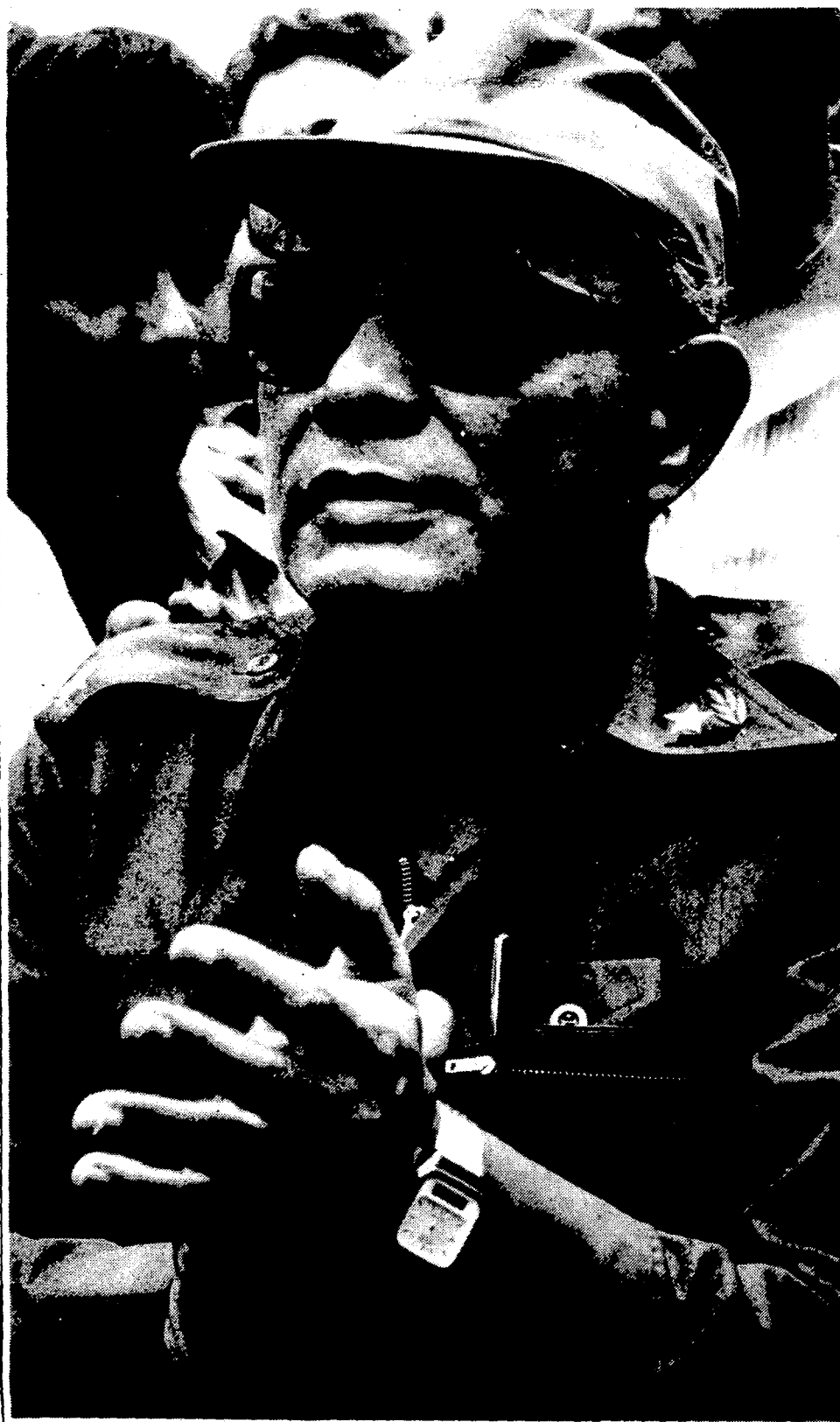
Few Nicaraguans expect the United States to invade directly until the outcome of Reagan's campaign in November. The Sandinistas moved up the date of the elections—postponed earlier until 1985—in order to minimize the chance of external disruption.

"We know the United States will say, regardless of whether or not the right participates, that these are 'Communist elections,'" says the FSLN's Morales. "Therefore we are determined to have the best, most fair election possible."

With an eye on U.S. media coverage, the opposition groups are finding reasons to stay out of the race. Paradoxically, this path appears to guarantee their own demise as Nicaraguan citizens go to the polls in their country's first free election.

Vladimir Klimenko was in Nicaragua in February and March.

Nicaragua election divides opposition



More Work For Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave

By Ruth Schwartz Cowan
Basic Books, 257 pp.,
\$17.95

Never Done: A History of American Housework

By Susan Strasser
Pantheon, 365 pp.,
\$11.95

By Alice Kessler-Harris

Among the great unresolved issues faced by the contemporary women's movement, few seem more intractable than housework. Since the modern housewife emerged from the shadow of Victorian pieties about the importance of preserving the purity of the home, she has been mercilessly chained to her stove and her broom.

Not even her increased presence in the workforce has released her from primary responsibility for the home. As recent studies have shown, few men are willing to do more than occasionally "help out."

How should this seemingly unchangeable condition be viewed? Is it a necessary consequence of the patriarchal family, as argued in the early '70s? Is it a by-product of the sexual division of labor, reinforced by the demands of industrial life? Is it technologically determined?

Does the circumstance of housewifery, in short, dwell in some unmalleable sense of women's place? If so, only an overhaul of deeply rooted gender constraints would make change thinkable. Or, could it be rooted in the more recent past, a product of the combined forces of technology and ideology, and thus a potential field of struggle?

At last, two new books tackle this issue and suggest the possibility of change. A tribute to the supportive environment of the growing community of feminist scholars, both emerge from the State University of New York at Stonybrook, where Susan Strasser was once a student of Ruth Cowan.

Not surprisingly, the books share much in common. Dissatisfaction with women's present condition drives both authors to a detailed attempt at reconstructing the history of housework. Each book illuminates the changing tasks of women, both exemplifying and advancing the new social history—the search to reconstruct the daily lives of ordinary people.

Both authors credit new sources of energy (gas, then electricity) that emerged as a by-product of industrialization with creating major changes in household work. Cowan dates the transition at around 1860. Before that, she says, the work done in the household would have been familiar to anyone who had engaged in it in the preceding 200 years. Strasser, more conscious of the diffusion of technology than its invention, puts the date around the turn of the century.

Class differences.

Both recognize class differences as crucial to any assessment of change—in part because the chores of the 19th century middle-class housewife were in some measure accomplished by servants and in part because technology was distributed at rates roughly according to income. Thus some of the poorest families in rural areas lived into the 1950's

without benefit of technology others had long taken for granted.

The analytic concern of these books is different, however. So the reader who wants to understand why, despite labor-saving devices, women have remained tied to housework will profit by reading both. Cowan is concerned with what she describes early on as the incomplete industrialization of the household. Why, she asks, in the face of technology that has the potential not only for eliminating household labor but also for collectivizing it, is there now more not less work to be done at home? She offers a three-fold answer.

First, household technology developed out of the profit-making imperatives of those who produce it, not in response to the needs of people who work in the home. In Cowan's best-developed example, she shows how gas refrigeration, probably more efficient and certainly cheaper to operate than the now almost universal electric version, lost ground when undercapitalized companies fell victim to the money and marketing techniques of General Electric.

Second, because home equipment is not designed to maximize the efficiency of the homemaker (who is, after all, unpaid) but to appeal to her capacity to take care of her family more effectively, it often encourages housewives to raise their standards. Cowan, acknowledging the convenience of the bathroom with hot and cold running water and flush toilets, argues that its capacity to harbor germs of all

kinds required far more time in cleaning than did the outhouse that left germs safely out of doors.

Finally, Cowan writes that new technology often returns to the household tasks that were previously done outside the home. In the 19th century, for example, wherever there was a little discretionary income the wash was done by a laundress, or, later, sent out to a local power laundry. But the 20th century wash is most often easily and quickly handled by automatic equipment. Because it is done at home, it falls to the lot of the homemaker. Moreover, the home washer and dryer increase the likelihood that we will change clothing more often and are accompanied by complicated instructions about hot and cold water, ways of sorting items and kinds of soap to use. And worse, to purchase such products wives formerly outside the marketplace must earn an income, and so most women add wage-earning to the burden of responsibility for the household.

This well-intentioned argument is emotionally appealing, but in the end flawed. That the limits on available technology are to some extent the limits of a system that undervalues the unpaid work of the home and diverts it to its own purposes is an acceptable notion.

Yet those who do this work make choices. For many, especially poor women, technology offers a trade-off: work outside the house replaces some of the work within it. The lure of higher stan-

dards, ideological at root, allows much room for rebellion. Women are not simply the victims of technology and the dupes of advertising.

Cowan's perspective comes in part from studies by Joann Vanek and others done in the early '70s. These suggested that women were imprisoned by technology into serving their husbands and children more thoroughly and were thus spending more time at household tasks. But since then the women's movement has begun to spread alternative ideas among some women.

Household struggle.

Perhaps it is wishful thinking, but I prefer to believe that the new generation has turned the household into an arena of struggle. It is at least arguable that some part of the movement of women into paid labor reflects their desire to exploit the potential of available technology and to resist being exploited by it.

The combined tasks of household and paid work do make more work for mothers and non-mothers. And yet the possibility of doing two jobs also offers women a range of options that previously existed only for those with servants. The increased sum total of work inside and outside the household properly belongs at the door of social changes that have altered family life, economic expectations and job possibilities.

Strasser suggests that the issue has another dimension. Her dis-

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Gas refrigeration lost out to monied interests of G.E.

satisfaction with the present stems from the quality, not the quantity of household work. Although she and Cowan agree about how change occurred, she creates a more vivid portrait of its reception. For her, technology is the mechanism not the end of change, and the rich texture of the book comes from watching the way it diffuses and scatters into the crevices of every home.

Strasser carefully takes us through the major changes in energy provision and through each major set of tasks in which women engage. Cooking, cleaning, taking in boarders, laundry, sewing and consuming all warrant separate chapters. For each, she demonstrates the shifts over a period of years until near the end of the tale we recognize our own childhood. The method allows a broad look at the lives of a variety of women and suggests the uneven nature of household transformation.

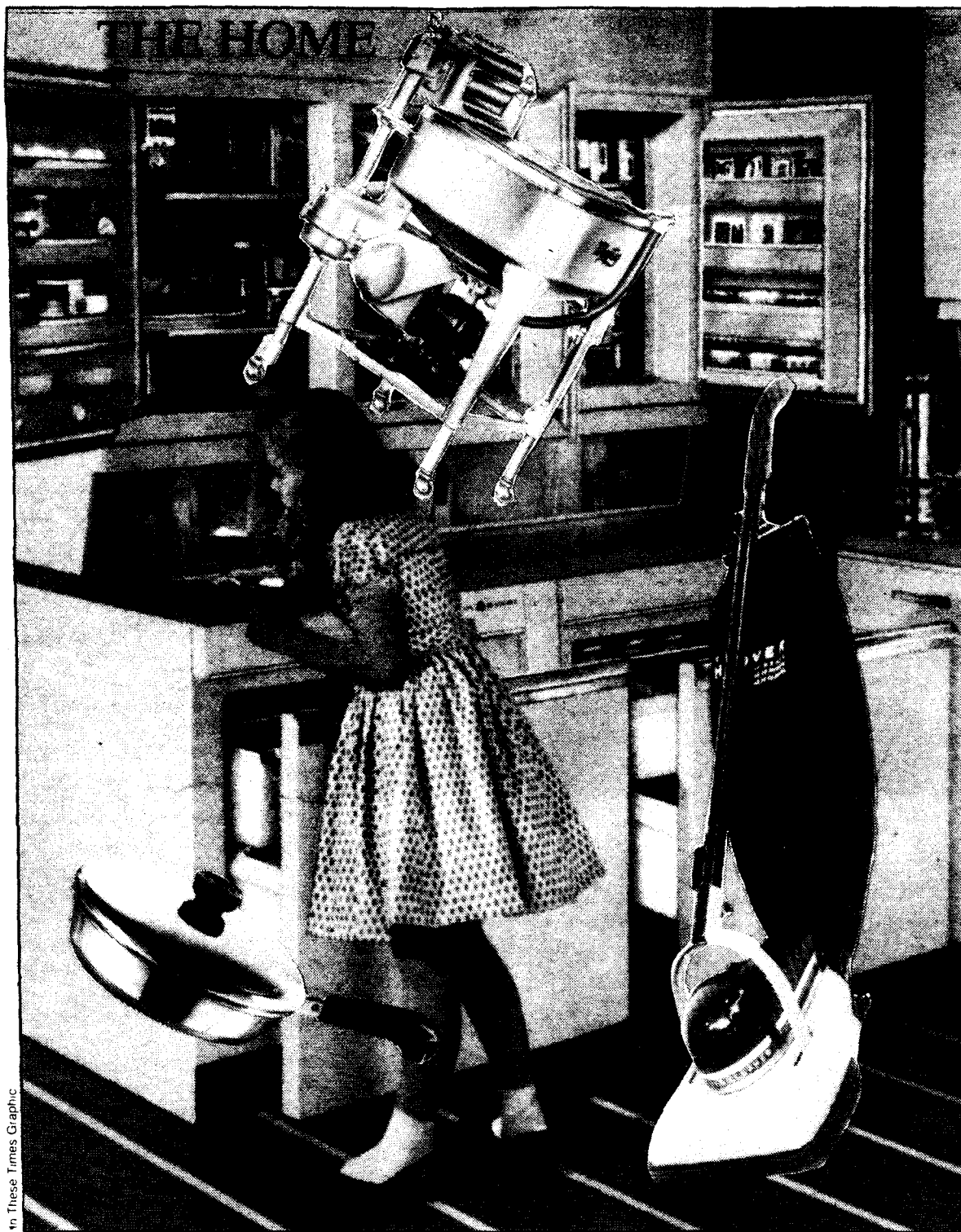
She reveals the positive as well as the negative side of innovation. After hearing of an appliance that reduced work, women of all classes rushed to buy it as soon as their means would allow. This accounts, for example, for the rapid dissemination of the electric iron after the turn of the century.

According to Strasser, most women believed that the unregulated iron without thermostatic controls (which were not invented until 1927) was superior to the series of heavy irons that had to be heated and reheated on the stove. Did the iron then produce more work? Remembering Cowan's argument, I wondered if it would not encourage women to iron extra items of clothing. (We all remember the days in which men's underwear were ironed.) But in my own life, I've chosen to buy synthetic fabrics not available to my mother's generation, and rarely touch an iron.

Strasser suggests the potential freedom inherent in such technological advances as well as in prepared foods and convenience products. But in a curious final chapter she seems to indicate that they are somehow responsible for weakening the affectional ties that have held households together. It is as though too much work has been removed from the home. In a sense, she's right. The technological innovation that has made running a household comparatively simple also makes it possible for people to live alone and care for their homes while they earn their livings, something no colonial farmer could have done. The resultant loneliness leads Strasser to think about collectivizing some household activities. Cowan comes to the same conclusions by another route.

At the heart of both books lies a resonant acknowledgement of a changing process. If Cowan proposes that we have allowed technology to control us and Strasser affirms our inability to take control over it, then both conclusions suggest that there is nothing unchanging about housework. To reverse the tide requires first a clear understanding of the overlay between ideology and technology and then a hard look at political solutions.

■
Alice Kessler-Harris' latest book is Out to Work: A History of Wage-earning Women in the United States, published by Oxford.



Endless housework



Mike Nussbaum (left) and Joe Mantegna (right) display their ensemble acting virtuosity in *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

THEATER

Mamet reveals "crime latent in business"

By Joel Schechter

The winner of the Pulitzer Prize in drama is almost invariably described as an "original voice" in the American theater. David Mamet, this year's winner, deserves praise less for his own voice than for recording other voices.

The colloquial language in his plays sounds so authentic that you suspect Mamet transcribed it aboard a merchant marine ship, in a real-estate office or in a junk shop, the settings for some of his plays. At times the dialogue is too precious, as if Mamet has collected working-class jargon solely to amuse himself or middle-class theatergoers. At his best, however, he portrays the disintegration of American myths of personal and professional success. He does this through the language of ordinary people removed from success and vulnerable to those myths.

Mamet was born in Chicago in 1947, and many of his plays were first professionally staged there. He founded the St. Nicholas Theater (now defunct) in the city, and he began a continuing association with Gregory Mosher at the Goodman Theater in 1976. Mosher directed Mamet's newest play, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, which just won the Pulitzer Prize for its Chicago production, now on Broadway. This new play is Mamet's best yet.

Some of his earlier works, such as *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* (1976) were more like Second City cabaret sketches than full-length, detailed works. Even his recent scripts seem underwritten at times. Writing a few screenplays (*The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *The Verdict*) since 1980 evidently has helped Mamet develop greater control over the narrative structure of his plays, one result of which is the intriguing comic plot of *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

Like his most substantial earlier play, *American Buffalo*, the

newest work tells the story of a robbery. This time it is an "inside job," set up by one of the sellers of *Glengarry Highlands*. Anger at ungrateful employers leads this Chicago real-estate agent to steal his company's files for a rival agency. Act Two takes place at the scene of the crime, in the ransacked office from which he has removed 5,000 file cards listing prospective buyers. The floor is littered with old sales contracts, and the picture window is broken and boarded up. The agency, which specializes in selling Florida land to buyers who never see their lots, looks like abandoned property itself.

Into the ruins strolls Shelly Levene, reveling in his \$82,000 sale of Florida lots to an elderly couple. Then Levene discovers

that the couple has bilked him. They wanted someone to keep them company and tell them stories in exchange for a bounced check. Some of the customers seem to be better confidence men than Shelly.

Salesmen have been portrayed as victims before, most notably in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, currently winning praise for its Broadway revival starring Dustin Hoffman. Mamet's play is far less sentimental, less sympathetic to the salesman, than Miller's. The new work could even be regarded as a counterplay to Miller's.

Mamet depicts salesmen as victimizers as well as victims. The real-estate men become victims of their own participation in dishonest and vicious business practices. One agent loses \$6,000

in sales and a bonus Cadillac, another loses \$82,000 and his job, the office management loses its file of 5,000 buyers. Other, less measurable losses also occur as these men labor under highly alienating conditions, in a world built of maps, contracts, brochures, words—all they have to prove that their product exists.

The salesmen know the Florida paradise they sell only through colorful brochures, idyllic Scottish names (Glen Ross Farms, *Glengarry*) and persistent sales pitches. The land may be worthless, if it exists at all. The only local proof of its existence is a customer's signed and cashed check. Talking is the form of labor through which these salesmen sell paradise and earn their livings.

The four salesmen in *Glengarry Glen Ross* repeatedly display their verbal virtuosity, or lack of it, by selling confidence in themselves through powerful, often profane spiels. From words they struggle to wrest instant if false intimacy and illusions of security and profit for their buyers. Mamet has written some very amusing dialogue for these con men. He also gives them strong invectives to ward off the aggressive presence of rivals and their young, coldly efficient office manager.

Their profanity also gives the men a sense of virility and fraternity. The worst insult hurled at the new office manager is that he is "not a man" because he deprives one of his salesmen of a dishonest deal. "Manhood" exists only for the sake of final sales.

Mamet also suggests that male bonding is an integral part of the contract-closing in this office. One customer enters to say that his wife wants a refund, but he hesitates to ask for it after a salesman suggests they talk about it "man-to-man" over a drink.

The talk on stage is almost too vivid, in contrast to the visually dull tableaux of salesmen sitting around the office and the restaurant. Heightened realism of movement and decor would serve the play better than the drab, static look of its current production (the men in the restaurant barely look at their

drinks, and waiters never enter at all; surely even a small Chinese restaurant in Chicago would look livelier). To director Gregory Mosher's credit, he wisely decided not to cast famous actors in any of the roles. (Paul Newman and Al Pacino were considered.) The play benefits from the acting ensemble's creation of a group portrait, with no star turns. It would be self-defeating, anyway, if famous actors were to portray men battling against anonymity and managerial neglect.

Mamet's characters sometimes cheapen language, and sometimes make it expensive, in their pursuit of management approval and sales. There is almost nothing personal or gentle in the salesmen's language. Profane words may be the only ones they can call their own, since the curses don't appear in the sales brochures.

The fact that speech has become a commodity in small offices, as well as in large marketing campaigns and presidential telecasts, is not terribly new or surprising. But by juxtaposing such sales speeches with an office robbery, Mamet provocatively eradicates the fine, tragicomic line between business and crime.

Failure to sell enough property leads one of the salesmen to commit a theft against his own office. Yet in a curious way, he is simply extending the logic of everyday business by selling property (the company files) to a new customer, who happens to run a rival agency. The play reveals "the crime latent in business," as Walter Benjamin once said of Brecht's book, *The Threepenny Novel*; and it comes closer than most American drama has in recent years to sharing Brecht's satiric, anti-capitalist attitudes.

Despite the Pulitzer Prize, *Glengarry Glen Ross* may not last too long on Broadway. Tired businessmen in search of entertainment in New York will not enjoy Mamet's scathing depiction of them. But the play should be seen and staged elsewhere by those tired of business as usual.

Joel Schechter teaches at the Yale School of Drama.

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Kirby Mittelmeier.

LOS ANGELES, CA

May 11, 12

The women of LA are Claiming Our Fair Share with Barbara Ehrenreich, Norma Johnson, Frances Fox Piven, Lydia Baca, Eleanor Glenn and others at a conference on women and poverty. Join us at Belmont High, 1575 W. 2nd St., Los Angeles. Fri., May 11, 8 p.m.; Sat., May 12, 8:30 a.m. For information, call LA DSA: (213) 385-0650.

CHICAGO, IL

May 12

26th Annual Thomas-Debs Dinner honoring William Lucy, President of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists and Secretary-Treasurer of the

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Featured speaker will be Barbara Ehrenreich. Music by Irwin Helfer, Clark Dean, Angela Brown, O.D. Payne. Childcare for those who reserve it by May 4. Tickets \$30. For more information call Jason at 871-7700, or write to Thomas-Debs, 1300 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657.

May 17

Michael Harrington, author and Co-Chair of DSA, will speak on "1984 and Beyond: If We Win, If Reagan Wins." 7:30 p.m. at Wellington Ave. Church, 615 W. Wellington. Comments by Bob Stark and Jenny Rohrer. \$2 donation requested. Reception will follow. Free childcare. For more information, call Jason at 871-7700.

DES MOINES, IA

May 19-20

Join with Pete Seeger, Holly Near, Ronnie Gilbert, Inti Illimani, Sweet Honey in the Rock, and many others. Saturday and Sunday, May 19 and 20, at Living History Farms near Des Moines. For the Iowa Peace Chautauqua. Workshops, exhibits, speakers, and more. \$15.00 in advance for entire weekend. Other rates available. 4211 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50312. (515) 274-4851.

NEW YORK, NY

May 11

Network/Forum presents "Socialism in One City?", a panel discussion on Progressives in Power with Derek Shearer (Santa Monica Planning Commission) and Nick Carbone (formerly Hartford City Council). Moderated by Pierre Clavel (Cornell University). CUNY Graduate Center, Auditorium, 33 West 42nd Street. 6:00 p.m. Admission free; contribution requested. A New York Planners Network activity.

ITHACA, NY

June 4-August 7

Cornell Summer Planning Program. Bennett Harrison, Frank Popper, Eugenie Birch, Peter Marcuse, other visiting and resident faculty examine industrial policy, land reform, women and planning, international development, other planning topics in 3- and 6-week courses. \$780/course; financial aid possible. City & Regional Planning, Box 425, 201 W. Sibley, Ithaca, NY 14853. (607) 256-2333.

MEDFORD, MA

June 25-29

Institute for Management and Community Development, Tufts University, Medford, Mass. Intensive courses in community economic de-

velopment, democratic management, financial planning, women's community venture development, decision-making, cooperative business development, computers and management. For more information, contact: Tufts University, Department of Urban and Environmental Policy, Medford, MA 02155. Phone: (617) 381-3394.

BOSTON, MA

July 19-22

11th International Human Unity Conference. "The Healing of the Nations: A Personal Purpose." Presentations, workshops, arts, personal interchange. Bernie Siegel, Gerald Jampolsky, Frances Horn, William Ury, King Goodwill (Zulu Nation), others. Contact: David Pasikov, HUC'84, Rt. 3, Box 87, Epping, NH 03042; (603) 679-2211.

INDIANA, PA

October 24-26

Indiana University of Pennsylvania will hold a conference on the global economy. Speakers include: Richard Barnett, Dave Dyson, Barbara Ehrenreich, Ben Harrison, David Landes, Ann Markusen, June Nash, Harley Shaiken, Tim Shorrock and Immanuel Wallerstein. Information: Irwin Marcus, (412) 357-2237; History Department, IUP, Indiana, PA 15705.

Election

Continued from page 7

PDC and the guerrillas.

ARENA TV ads interspersed shots of Duarte with guerrillas fighting, buses burning and pictures of Guillermo Ungo, Ruben Zamora and Fidel Castro, thus linking Duarte to the "subversion." Instead, ARENA promised "*paz y trabajo*"—peace and work—which are attractive prospects in a country with little of either. ARENA also appealed to the upwardly mobile, contemptuously referred to as "*chicos plasticos*" or plastic people by PDC supporters—when it proposes to abolish the tax on such luxury items as cars and motorcycles as well as its general pro-business stance.

Duarte also promised peace and prosperity and emphasized his international connections and ability to get foreign aid. One TV spot ended with shots of Duarte with Ronald Reagan and the Pope.

The PDC aggressively counterattacked ARENA. When ARENA printed a caricature of the ballot marking the PDC side with a hammer and sickle, the next day PDC copied the ad, but put a swastika on the ARENA side. One of the hardest-hitting radio ads opened with an ominous, horror-movie soundtrack: "Will our country allow the imposition of a dictatorship of the extreme right like that proposed by ARENA? Nunca! [Never] It

would only bring more pain, more violence and more death. Our cemeteries already have enough crosses. A dictatorship of the extreme right would only help the guerrillas triumph. Reject that path." The music becomes upbeat. "For the good of everyone—Duarte for president."

One thing is certain: after the election, crosses will continue to sprout in Salvadoran cemeteries. Instead of creating a political consensus, the election heightened tensions among political forces that could barely coexist prior to May 6. Meanwhile, the fate of El Salvador will continue to be decided on the battlefield. ■

Chris Norton is on assignment for *In These Times* in Central America.

Satire

Continued from page 16

different from, say, Johnny Carson's strings of one-liners, the jabs that a fundamentally unpolitical man takes at a remote and incomprehensible realm. Freeman's "Council Wars" are based on close attention to the intricacies of a real political world. He takes for granted that his audience knows whereof he speaks, and the audience goes wild.

Freeman is cheerfully adept with the Rev. Jesse Jackson, whose public style he has down cold. On the record, made last

year, his Rev. Jackson preaches: "I Have a Press Agent." (More recently the refrain is: "I Have a Scheme.") He catches Jackson's stylized cadences and stretched images: "Ronald Reagan is fast-breaking down the basketball court of Armageddon toward the slam dunk of doom..." "Even though I spend more money on my Frye boots than many of you will ever make in your lives," he says, "...I have a dream that someday the sons of stockbrokers and the sons of stock boys will be able to sit down together—and listen to me." The sting is that Freeman is black.

Freeman draws his most pungent material from the strains of the black middle class. In "Dawn of the Niggerish," a young black tough goes soft when he takes his mother's advice and puts on a Lacoste shirt complete with alligator. Ghetto kids who go straight end up talking like Harold Washington, playing golf and chess and carrying American Express cards. Freeman takes big chances and produces big laughs with material that skates right along the edge of racist stereotypes. He relishes toying with the obvious but avoids succumbing to it. He shows real affection for the objects of his wit.

By contrast, in his pieces on Reagan and Kissinger, he has had trouble in making their malevolence *live*. They don't seem outrageous enough. But in a brilliant piece he did a couple of months ago (after his live record appeared, alas—this is the trouble with recording topical humor), he set up an Iranian quiz show MC'd by the Ayatollah Kho-

meini, in which the winner gets to detonate a truck bomb and ascend directly to heaven. The show was called "Dump Truck to Paradise," and it was so far-fetched it sailed.

Freeman closes both his performance and his record with a mawkish, not comic piece in which he must intend to express where he stands. Even after Washington's victory, he says, "We're all still the people we were, / Of various colors and largely absurd, / People who just want to live the good life / Free of racio-political strife..." He hopes "we as a people [won't] let bullshit divide us / And exercise patience toward those who deide us. / Everyone knows that they're just politicians / And we are the people and we must love one another..." Antipolitical, in the manner of the counterculture of yore, but deeply political too.

Freeman is suspicious of politicians, even of "our" politicians, but in the name of equality. This already marks him off from the mainstream comics. He worries for Harold Washington. ("To defeat me," Darth Vrdolyak says to Harold Skytalker, "you must become me.") It's a good sign that Aaron Freeman is among us. More clout to him.

"Aaron Freeman Live at CrossCurrents" is available from CrossCurrents Records, 3206 N. Wilton, Chicago, IL 60657, for \$7.56 on cassette tape or record.

Todd Gitlin is the author of *The Whole World is Watching* and *Inside Prime Time*.

CLASSIFIED

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Joking well

is the

Aaron Freeman satirizes
more than Chicago politics.

best revenge.

By Todd Gitlin

FOR POLITICAL SATIRE TO WORK, THE performers and the audience have to be co-conspirators. The audience must be attuned to politics in the first place and take politics seriously, as a force that matters. It must be willing to laugh at authorities, heroes, pretensions.

Whether the audience knows it or not, it has to have hope. Politicians mock the common hopes, and in revenge, satire turns those hopes back against them. Satire unmasks appearance: it marks out the distance between the illusions the heroes claim and the reality they obscure.

Aaron Freeman is a political satirist who succeeds by taking his audience's hopes seriously. This very funny man packs crowds into Chicago's CrossCurrents club on the North Side. Once the seedbed for Second City, Chicago is a perfect site for political humor. It's a savvy town. The greatest opinions fly through the air with the greatest of ease. Its local politics are absorbing, and the recent changes form the bases for Freeman's routines.

The crackup of the old Democratic Party machine and Harold Washington's mayoral victory in 1983 did much to establish a new political mood. Long crowded out, blacks have entered the power chambers. And with the economic shift toward the service sector, the young urban professionals (a.k.a. Yuppies) have arrived, bringing with them French-named restaurants, sophisticated bookstores and upscale movie theaters on streets that were working-class just 20 years ago. These are the people who make the new politics and attend Freeman's show.

Freeman skates along the race and class tensions of these new politics. He takes on the targets closest to home. His humor bites every prominent style in American political life now but is best at mocking his audience's own heroes, especially Harold Washington and Jesse Jackson. He wields the traditional method: "reductio ad absurdum."

Freeman's best act is "Council Wars," a brilliant, long-running serial spinning out the adventures of the local powers. (His record, "Aaron Freeman Live at CrossCurrents," contains three episodes.) "Council Wars" probably requires a glossary for listeners outside Cook County, but Freeman's ingenuity and gift for mimicry make the effort of translation worthwhile. In what follows, you have to know that Edward Vrdolyak is the chairman of the local Democratic Party and ringleader of the old Machine forces; that Martin Oberman is a liberal city councilman; and that Mayor Harold Washington, who jousts with Vrdolyak, manifests—as Freeman would say—a proclivity for polysyllabic discourse.

In "Council Wars," the hard-breathing Darth Vrdolyak, he of the sepulchral voice and the harsh, back-in-the-throat breathing, represents the Empire. He breaks the will of former Mayor Jane Byrne, telling her, "It is obvious you do not know the power of—The Clout." Jesse Jack Solo combines with Harold Skytalker to mobilize The Movement against The Clout. As he faces off hummings, Skytalker says things like, "I will assiduously pursue your disestablishment." The "Yhonks" of the Southwest Side make appearances; so does Obi-Wan Oberman of Liberal-land, who brings gifts of wine and cheese.

A master of timing, Freeman does the nasty breaths, buzzing magic swords, all the mimicry, everything. The result is very

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